ENG1205 INTRODUCTION TO COMPOSITION I

MODULE 1

- **Unit 1 Pre Writing Activities**
  - 1.1 Planning
  - 1.1.1 Materials and Resources
  - 1.1.2 Group Work
  - 1.2 Essay Writing Strategies
  - 1.2.1 Note Taking
  - 1.2.2 Organise Your Work
  - 1.2.3 Analyse the Title of Your Essay
  - 1.2.4 Build up Your Essay
  - 1.2.5 Revise
  - 1.2.6 Errors to Avoid While Writing
- **Unit 2 The English Sentence**
  - 1.1 Meaning of Words
  - 1.2 Combination of Words
  - 1.3 Formation of Words
  - 1.4 Origin of SOME ENGLISH WORDS
  - 1.4.1 English Words that Come from Place Names
  - 1.4.2 Names of Different Kinds of Cloth that Originate from Place Names
  - 1.4.3 Words Borrowed from Other Countries
  - 1.4.4 Words that Only Occur in Plural
- **Unit 3 Basic Simple English Sentence Patterns 1**
  - 1.1 Basic Simple Sentence Patterns and Basic Simple Sentences
  - 1.2 Non-Basic Simple Sentences
  - 1.2.1 Movement
  - 1.2.2 Insertion
  - 1.3 Non-Simple Sentences
- **Unit 4 Basic Simple English Sentence Patterns 11**
  - 1.1 Pattern 1 Expanded
  - 1.1.1 Nouns
  - 1.1.2 Noun phrases
  - 1.1.3 Pronouns
  - 1.2 Pattern 2 Expanded
  - 1.3 Pattern 3 Expanded
  - 1.4 Pattern 4 Expanded
  - 1.5 Pattern 5 Expanded
  - 1.5.1 Adjectives and Adjective Phrases
  - 1.6 Pattern 6 Expanded
- **Unit 5 Concord in English**
  - 1.1 Concord Relationships
  - 1.1.1 Concord of Person
  - 1.2 Number Concord
  - 1.2.1 Singular Nouns

MODULE 2

- **Unit 1 Paragraph and Paragraph Development**
  - 1.1 Thematic Aspect of a Paragraph
  - 1.1.1 Unity
  - 1.1.2 Coherence
  - 1.1.3 Emphasis
  - 1.2 Structural Aspects of a Paragraph
  - 1.2.1 The Topic Sentence
  - 1.2.2 Paragraph Development
- **Unit 2 The Grammar of Paragraphs 1**
  - 1.1 Punctuation in English
  - 1.1.1 The Full Stop (.)
  - 1.1.2 The Question Mark (?)
  - 1.1.3 The Exclamation Mark (!)
  - 1.1.4 The Comma (,)
  - 1.2 Conjuncts
  - 1.3 Disjuncts
  - 1.4 Adjuncts
- **Unit 3 The Grammar of Paragraphs 1**
  - 1.1 The Colon (:)
  - 1.2 The Dash (-)
  - 1.3 Semi-Colon (;)
  - 1.4 Brackets (Parenthesis) ( )
  - 1.5 Quotation Marks or Inverted Commas (‘’)
  - 1.6 Italics
  - 1.7 The Apostrophe (‘)
  - 1.8 The Hyphen
  - 1.9 Capital Letters (ABC)
- **Unit 4 Beyond the Sentence 1**
  - 1.1 Synonymy
  - 1.2 Antonyms
  - 1.2.1 Complementary Pairs
  - 1.2.2 Gradable Antonyms
  - 1.2.3 Relational Opposites
  - 1.3 Hyponymy
  - 1.4 Repetition

MODULE 3

- **Unit 1 Beyond the Sentence II**
  - 1.1 Collocations
  - 1.1.1 Free Collocations
  - 1.1.2 Fixed Collocations
  - 1.2 Grammatical Devices for Sentence Connection
  - 1.2.1 Conjunctions
  - 1.3 Identification
  - 1.4 Structural Parallelism
  - 1.5 Substitution
  - 1.6 Ellipsis
- **Unit 2 The Narrative Essay**
  - 1.1 Principles of Writing Narrative Essays
  - 1.1.1 The Plot
  - 1.1.2 The Setting
  - 1.1.3 The Characters
  - 1.1.4 Introduction
  - 1.1.5 The Body of the Narrative
  - 1.1.6 The Climax and Ending
  - 1.2 Narrative Technique
- **Unit 3 The Descriptive Essay**
  - 1.1 Formal and Thematic Purposes of Fictional Description
  - 1.1.1 Close Observation
  - 1.1.2 Close Selection
  - 1.1.3 Formulate an Impression
  - 1.1.4 Practise Free Writing
- **Unit 4 The Persuasive/Argumentative Essay**
  - 1.1 Research
  - 1.2 Introduction
  - 1.2.1 Ordering Sentences in an Introduction
  - 1.3 Paragraph Flow
  - 1.4 Summary
  - 1.5 Editing
  - 1.6 Conclusion of the Essay
- **Unit 5 The Expository Essay**
  - 1.1 Choosing a Topic
  - 1.2 Developmental Pattern Writing
  - 1.2.1 Definition
  - 1.2.2 Cause and Effect
  - 1.2.3 Classification
  - 1.3 Organization
  - 1.4 Research Work

ENG1205 INTRODUCTION TO COMPOSITION I

MODULE 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the best ways to take possession of knowledge is to write about what you have heard. At times you listen to a lecture and you think you already know what the writer is saying but by the time you attempt to write it out using your own words that is when you will discover that you do not know as much as you think you do. You might have been thinking that you know how to argue well only to discover when you start writing that you do not know how to put your points together. That is why it is important to practice writing different kinds of essays so that you can be proficient in almost all kinds of writing.

Composition writing is also designed to test a candidate's ability to use English as an effective means of communication in specific situations. These types of compositions are designed to make you express yourself with clarity and coherence in a manner appropriate to the audience, purpose, topic and situation. You may come across situations in life when you may have to argue, describe, narrate an incidence or do some other things that require some skills verbally, non-verbally or in writing.

When such situations occur, you are expected to be able to demonstrate your knowledge and skill by presenting what is logical, acceptable, convincing and understandable to the audience, reader or listener. Below are some of the objectives of this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Plan adequately for any type of composition,
- Determine the materials needed for any given type of composition,
- Attempt writing the outline of some compositions and the materials, needed for such writings all on your own.

- **Unit 1 Pre Writing Activities**

3.1 PLANNING

Planning is a very important stage in composition writing. In some public exams, some students get disturbed when they see some other candidates scribbling away almost immediately they collect their paper. The confusion may be so much for some naïve students such that they too start writing without planning or thinking much about what they want to write. In a public exam, you have to take a few minutes off to think about the topic, the points you are going to write about, how you will arrange your paragraphs, what your introduction will be and what your conclusion is likely to be. All this planning should not take more than 7 minutes.

If it is a group assignment, and you have probably decided on what to write, you need to plan and decide on the following:

3.1.1 MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

These are important because your topic will determine the kind of *resources* or *materials* you need to look for and this you must do before you start writing. If it is a take home assignment, you can visit your departmental library or the main University library. *Resources* can be classmates, lecturers and computers for materials; you can also browse and check the net for *materials*. The *materials* can be books, handouts, magazines, extracts, submitted undergraduate of postgraduate theses etc. The resources can be very useful in helping you to structure your thoughts, decide on the topic, get adequate and enough materials for reference etc. You also have to decide whether you want to work alone or with other people. In actual fact, an instructor can give out a group assignment or individual work. When this happens, you have to decide whether the assignment requires that you do it alone or with other people.

3.1.2 GROUP WORK

Deciding whether you want to work with other people is part of planning. 'Cill Home' on 'writing' notes the following as the advantages of working alone or with other people.

Advantages of group work

Reasons for working with other people:

- You get more ideas from other people,
- They can suggest improvements,
- Some other people can tell you if you make a mistake,
- They can encourage you to do bet,
- Explaining things to other people can help you understand better,
- Sharing helps you to be quicker,
- You can share your thoughts and feelings,
- Teamwork skills and experience are important for your career.

Reasons for working alone:

- Your work will be different from other people's work,
- If you share a task, you can learn your own part of the task,
- You may not want to be influenced by other people,
- You may not want to share your ideas with other people.

Whichever way you decide to work, planning is important. The next section is about some essay writing strategies.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What are some of the things you need to take into consideration before writing?

1. Taking a few minutes off to think about the topic
2. Think on how to arrange the paragraphs
3. Plan on what an introduction of writing and its conclusion to be

3.2 ESSAY WRITING STRATEGIES

3.2.1 NOTE TAKING

Note taking is an important aspect of writing. Writing down the main points as it occurs to you while reading is important because it helps you to remember and organise the salient points in your work. When you have to analyse your topic, you need to write down the points as you hope to use them to develop the paragraphs as you write. You may even need to research a topic before you start writing and taking notes as you read will help you when you need to acknowledge the source of your information although it has been mentioned earlier on that you need to write in your own words as much as possible.

One of the purposes of taking notes is to help the student recall at a later time the essentials of what he/she has read. The mechanics of note taking such as *good hand writing, use of abbreviations* and *layout* are very important details to consider. Make sure you write legibly so that you and other authorised people can find your work easy to read at a later date. There have been cases of students who have written and have been called upon to read the same works later and have not been able to read them because of bad hand-writing. Going through what you have

written should be a constant practice and this habit should be cultivated during examinations as well. You should create time to go over your work before you submit. There may be some I(s) to dot or some t(s) to cross. Abbreviations may be good for personal work but not for examinations.

3.2.2 ORGANISE YOUR WORK

You should have an idea of how you want your work to be organized and you need to work towards this. If it is an argumentative essay, you should know the side you want to support. Even though you have to balance your arguments, much of your submission still has to reflect your support for whichever side you want to identify with. You should organise it in such a way that each paragraph has a main point while the other sentences are supporting. Your conclusion should be such that will summarise in brief the argument you have presented.

3.2.3 ANALYSE THE TITLE OF YOUR ESSAY

When you are given an essay topic, you need to analyse the title and make sure you understand what the question is trying to say. When you think you understand, you can use this knowledge to draft your introduction. If you misfire right from the beginning, you may loose your direction and focus thereby making you to score low marks on the write-up. For example, some students were asked to write an article sometimes ago on the following topics:

1. *Should capital punishment be abolished in the country?*
2. *Write an article on the need to curb the wave of violence in our country- Nigeria*

You may be surprised to know that some students misinterpreted the two essay topics in a very funny way. Some students mistook the first question on capital punishment to be corporal punishment and they wrote extensively on that. This made them to loose marks under *content*, *organisation*, *expression* and *mechanical accuracy*. The other set of students who answered the question *on the need to curb the wave of violence* were writing about the waves of the sea at the bar beach in Lagos. It may sound funny and you may be wondering if anybody could do such a thing. But it did happen. So, correct interpretation of the question is important.

At times an essay topic may have two or three parts, you must make sure you cover every part of the question otherwise you would not have done justice to the question. Analysing means breaking down into parts and dealing with each of the parts to get a compact whole.

3.2.4 BUILD UP YOUR ESSAY

You need to build up your essay on ideas you have developed yourself. Some of the ideas that will occur to you may be those you got from books you have read. You should examine those ideas very well to find out if they go along with your thoughts and if they do and you want to make use of them the way they are, you need to acknowledge the source so that you will not be accused of copying or plagiarism. *Andrew Roberts* notes that you should not allow the notes you put down on the books you have read to set the pattern of your essay. Your essay should express your own thoughts and that is why you have been advised to write in your own words.

3.2.5 REVISE

You should revise your work before you submit or before you even give it to another classmate or friend of yours to read through for you. It is possible that your skipped some errors while writing and going over the work for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors will do you a lot of good and save you from all kinds of embarrassment that such mistakes can cause. After the revision, you still give it to another friend to go through for you. This is particularly important if the write up is a long essay and you are all writing on different topics. But if the assignment is a class essay where you are all expected to compete for marks, it does not make sense giving it to someone else to read for you because you would have defeated the purpose for which the test or exam is set.

3.2.6 ERRORS TO AVOID WHILE WRITING

If non- English language specialists make mistakes while speaking, it is seen as pardonable but if an English language student or specialist does the same, it is frowned at. Once you claim to be an English language graduate, people see you as someone to contact in case of any difficulty on language issues. They may want to test if you know the spellings of words, meanings of expressions because they believe you know everything. Below are some errors to avoid:

Errors in Grammar - Omission of an essential element

The elements of structure of a clause are the same as the elements of structure of a sentence. (Subject, Predicator, Complement, Adverbial or Subject, Verb, Object, Complement). These essential elements which will be discussed in some of the units in this course are important for a sentence to be grammatically correct. Except a sentence is designed to have a particular structure, omitting an essential part of a sentence will make your sentence awkward and incorrect. * Some of the major errors in grammar include wrong tense, wrong tense sequence, misuse of modal operators (may/might/ can/ could etc) ambiguity in the use of pronouns, misuse or omission of articles, including confusion between countable and uncountable nouns, wrong prepositions, misuse of relatives, subordinators and conjunctions. There are also errors of concord (agreement between the subject and the verb).Some of these and others will be discussed in other units as you go along.

Punctuation Errors

Punctuation errors are errors that should be avoided in good writing and some of these include non-use of *full stops*, *question marks* or *exclamation* mark. Misuse or omission of *quotation marks*. Either *single* or *double quotation marks* could be used. Consistency is however important in the use of either *single* or *double quotation marks*. You must stick to one except in formal writings where you are instructed to do otherwise.

Some other punctuation errors include the use of a *comma* where a *full stop* or *semicolon* is required, insertion of *comma* between subject and verb and object, insertion of *comma* between subordinator or conjunction and following clause or group or between adjective and noun or between verb and adverb. Misuse of capital letters should also be avoided in good writing.

Spelling Errors

In modern English usage, there is a great deal of liberty. Nevertheless, spelling errors should be avoided as much as possible

Make sure you check up on your spellings before and after doing your write-up. In this case, all spelling errors can be detected and addressed before the submission of the write up. For example, putting a hyphen on words such as *how-ever, *some-one or failure to hyphenate a divided word at the end of a line could be considered as errors. In addition, faulty amalgamation e.g. writing inspite of instead of in spite of should be avoided.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Mention and discuss some essay writing strategies that have been mentioned in this unit.

1. Note taking
2. Organizing the work
3. Analyze the title of the Essay
4. Building up the essay
5. Revising
6. Avoiding errors while writing; such as:
a). Errors in grammar
b). Punctuation errors
c). Spelling errors

- **Unit 2 The English Sentence**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The English language like any other language is a set of symbols or signs made up of two types of substances- sound and marks. The sounds we make and the marks we produce have meanings in particular languages depending on which language(s) we speak. The sounds can be recognised in the speech media while the marks can be recognised in writing. Both sounds and marks are organised differently to give meanings. To produce a message, both sounds and marks are patterned in form of words, sentences and the paragraph. The word is the smallest of the three and it is usually found between two spaces.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Identify a word
- Describe how we arrive at the meanings of words in English
- Recognise some commonly misspelt words
- Get acquainted with how we form some words in English.

3.1 MEANING OF WORDS

You will notice that some of us just use words without knowing how they came to be. We see a book and call it a book. We see a *chair* and call it a *chair*. It is important to note that there is no logical link between words and what they stand for. This means, there is no reason why a *book* should be called a *book* or a *chair* being called a *chair*. Each of them could be called by another name and they are indeed being called by other names in other languages. For example, a *chair* is called *aga* in Yoruba language while a *table* is called *tabili*. The same language may refer to the same object by different names at different times of the history of its speakers. * All words and their meanings are arrived at through a sort of common agreement among the people speaking a particular language. The agreement is not a conscious one, all people just accept what others, fathers, mothers, brothers sisters, uncles say. It is conventional and theconvention is not based on the inherent nature of the objects or things being referred to. For example, a pig is not called a *pig* because it is *dirty*. If it had been called a *goat* at inception that would have been its name. In fact animal scientists have informed us that a pig is not even as dirty as we all think. It tends to stay very close to where there is water because it does not have pores on the skin where it can easily let out heat and that is why it has to roll in the water or muddy places to cool itself down. We are equally informed that it does not urinate in the pond or water in which it cools itself. If pressed, it comes out of the water to urinate on the ground. So you can now see that even a pig can be discreet when it comes to toileting.

If you take yourself as an example, you will discover that you just grew up to know that there is a figure in the household where you were born whom everybody calls *daddy* and you joined the others in calling him daddy too. The same thing with *mummy* and all other people you grew up to know. In fact, you just grew up to know that you are called *Chinyere* or *Bola* and you respond to that name whenever you are called. What happened was that some people gathered together when you were born to give you that name. If you had been named *Tinu* or*Chukwudi* you would have been bearing that name till today. You can then see that it is by a general consensus. It is conventional. There was nothing in you when you were born to suggest that the name you were given is the most appropriate for you or that if you had been given another, something terrible would have happened to you. Although, in Yoruba land, some children are named based on some circumstantial facts. Language changes and the meaning of words therefore changes just like fashion. Meaning of words may shrink, expand or even be completely replaced.

3.2 COMBINATION OF WORDS

As language users, we need to be familiar with how words combine together in English for effective communication and good writing. In English, certain combination of words behaves as if they were single words this combinatory behaviour is called collocation. ***Collocations*** are of two kinds; ***fixed*** and ***unfixed collocations***. A ***fixed collocation*** behaves like an individual word and wherever one is used, it must be treated as a unit e.g. through thick and thin. The component parts of such ***fixed collocations*** are ***unalterable***. You cannot add other words to it and the meaning of the fixed collocation has nothing to do with the meaning of the individual words.

Fixed collocations are often referred to as idioms. Phrasal verbs such as *to clean up, to look into* etc., are also expressions with fixed meanings regardless of the individual meanings of the root verbs and prepositions. *To look into* does not mean look+ into but it means to investigate or examine.

The two kinds of collocations are not functionally the same in the language. But the habitual use of the first set should be avoided in good writing because they have been overworked and have lost their originality and force. They are therefore referred to as ***clichés*** (an expression that is no longer effective because of overuse). On the other hand, the use of phrasal verbs should be encouraged or cultivated by every good user of the language.

Apart from the ***fixed collocations***, combinations of words are also controlled by their field of reference and this is usually referred to as range of collocation. For example, *butter can go rancid while fruit becomes rotten*. This type of collocation is an unfixed one.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Q1. How do we arrive at the meanings of words in English?

Q2. What are clichés in English?

A1. All words and their meanings are arrived at through a sort of common agreement among the people speaking a particular language. The agreement is not a conscious one, all people just accept what others, fathers, mothers, brothers sisters, uncles say. It is conventional and the convention is not based on the inherent nature of the objects or things being referred to.

A2. Clichés are phrases or expressions that have lost their impact through overuse. Examples of clichés:

- all in a day's work
- benefit og the doubt
- busy as a bee
- easier said than done
- fall on deaf ears
- exercise in futility
- food for thought
- in the same boat
- matter of life and death
- play it by ear
- take the bull by the horns

3.3 FORMATION OF WORDS

In English, words can be formed by adding prefixes and affixes to base forms of words. Words can be made up of at most three principal parts. The *core part* remains in the *middle* if all the *three parts* are *present*. When the *three parts* are not *present*, the *core part* can then be at the *beginning* or *end*. The *core part* is the *base form* while the other parts are called *affixes*. Those that come *before* the *base form* are called *prefixes* and those that come *after* are called *suffixes*. Below are examples:

un/beat/able

- un - prefix
- beat - base
- able - affix

An English word may be made up of just the *base form* e.g. *clean, big, choice, dirt, the, sell* etc.

Examples of words with *prefixes* only are: *intake, resit, inborn* etc.

Examples of words with *suffixes* only are: *education, educates, deliberately, mistakes, functional* etc.

In English too, we can have words with more than one base form. This usually happens with compound words e.g. *blackboard, headmaster, Whitehouse* etc.

The function and meanings of words should be learnt to avoid making mistakes or giving wrong interpretation to words. For example, the *suffix* –**less** always suggest the absence of what the base form means as in meaningless, *useless, careless*, etc which means without meaning, *use, care*, but this is not the same with a word like priceless where the *suffix* **-less** means the opposite of what it means in the word *meaningless*. A *priceless* thing is something that is so valuable that you cannot put any price on it. When you come across words like this and you want to use them in your write-ups make sure your check your dictionary for their correct usage or else you you may find yourself misusing them.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Mention one of the ways by which words are formed in English. The examples you give should be different from the ones already given above.

- ***Suffix***: a letter or group of letters added at the end of a word or word part to form another word, e.g. "*-ly*" in "*quickly*" or "*-ing*" in "*talking*"

3.4 ORIGIN OF SOME ENGLISH WORDS

It is interesting to note that many of us use words while speaking and writing and we think they are all English words. The English language has borrowed a lot of words from many places and other countries and that is why at times you find it difficult to find adequate parts of speech for some of them. In this section, I will briefly take you through some words with interesting origins in English.

3.4.1 ENGLISH WORDS THAT COME FROM THE NAMES OF PEOPLE

- ***Biro*** (ballpoint pen) named after Laslo Biro, its Hungarian inventor.
- ***Boycott*** **(refuse to deal with)** after a landlord in Ireland who made himself unpopular by his treatment of his tenants and was socially isolated.
- ***Braille*** (name of a raised writing system used by blind people) from the name of its French inventor- Louis Braille.
- ***Saxophone*** (musical instrument) invented by the Belgian- **Adolphe Sax.**
- ***Watt*** (unit of power) from the 18th century Scottish inventor- James Watt.
- ***Hooligan*** (a rough lawless youth) from the Irish family name- Hooligan.

3.4.2 ENGLISH WORDS THAT COME FROM PLACE NAMES

- ***Bedlam*** (chaos) from the name of a famous London mental hospital once situated where Liverpool street station now stands.
- ***Spartan*** (severely simple) from the ancient Greek city of Sparta, famed for its austerity.
- ***Canter*** (movement of a horse, faster than a trot but slower than a gallop) a shortening of Canterbury, a town in South-east England.
- ***Gypsy*** (member of a particular group of travelling people). These people were once thought to have come from Egypt, hence the name.

3.4.3 NAMES OF DIFFERENT KINDS OF CLOTH THAT ORIGINATE FROM PLACE NAMES

· Angora (Ankara) · Gauze (Gaza) · Damask (Damascus)
· Satin (China) · Suede (Sweden)

1.4.3 WORDS BORROWED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

- **Turkey** - yoghurt, jackal, kiosk, caftan, tulip
- **Holland** - yacht, tattoo, cruise
- **Arabic** - mattress, cipher, algebra, harem, mufti,
- **Germany** - kindergarten, hamburger, blitz, waltz, poodle, snorkel, wanderlust, seminar, dachshund
- **Italy** - ghetto, piano, soprano, ballerina, confetti, fiasco, spaghetti, bandit, casino, vendetta
- **Greece** - dogma, drama, psychology, hippopotamus, pseudonym, synonym
- **France** - cuisine, gateau, chauffeur, boutique, crèche duvet coup, elite, sauté avant-garde, cul-de-sac, biget

1.4.4 WORDS THAT ONLY OCCUR IN PLURAL

Scissors, pliers, binoculars, scales, handcuffs, glasses/spectacles, Tweezers, shears, pincers (instruments for removing sharp objects)
Clothes, tights, pyjamas, leggings, shorts, jeans, trouser, Lodgings (e.g. a room) Goods (articles/items) when will the goods arrive?
Looks – looks are more important in a partner

▪ **UNIT 3 BASIC SIMPLE ENGLISH SENTENCE PATTERNS**

1.0 INRTODUCTION

Apart from knowing how words are formed, writing essays in English also demands adequate knowledge of sentence constructions and parts of a sentence, their functions, simple and complex sentences etc. In this course however, we shall deal mainly with basic simple sentences because we believe that if you can write simple sentences well then, it will not be difficult for you to write complex sentences when the need arises. Apart from this, it is better to write and be understood than to get things muddled up all in an attempt to impress the reader by writing complex sentences. There are some other grammar courses where you will be taught complex sentences at a deeper level. It is important for you to be conversant with the differences between simple and complex sentences and how the parts function together and differently because you will be doing a lot of writing.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

Identify and discuss basic simple sentence patterns in English

3.1 BASIC SIMPLE SENTENCE PATTERNS AND BASIC SIMPLE SENTENCES

There are *nine* (9) basic simple sentence patterns in English and below are these patterns:

1. Subject **Predicator**

The girl *prayed.*

2. Subject **Predicator** **Direct object**

The gentlemen *watched* *the movie.*

Please note that the parts of the sentences are realised by or represented by particular kinds of words or word groups (noun/noun phrases, verbs/verb phrases etc) The various parts of the sentence are referred to as elements of structure. The *subject/direct object* could be a *noun* or *noun phrase* while the predicator could be *verb /verb phrase*. Pattern 1 has only two elements of structure- *subject* and *predicate*. Pattern 2 has three elements of structure. Below are the remaining basic simple sentence patterns in English.

3. Subject **Predicator** **Indirect object (Oi)** **Direct object (Od)**

We *gave* *Tinu* *the orange.*

4. Subject **predicator** **Subject complement (Cs) (nominal)**

You *are* *a man.*

Nominal in front of subject complement for pattern 4 is an indication that all the items that can occupy that column are either nouns or noun phrases. Apart from this, there is always an intimate relationship between the subject and the subject complement in that the subject complements comments directly on the subject.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Study patterns 1-4 very carefully and construct 5 sentences each for each pattern.

1. Subject **Predicator**

The boy *died.*
He *dances*
The phone *rang*
The team *won*
The exam *approaches*

2. Subject **Predicator** **Direct object**

The student *wrote* *a test*
A cat *killed* *the rat*
The woman *bought* *fishes*
The muezzin *class* *the prayer*
A prefect *rings* *the bell*

3. Subject **Predicator** **Indirect object (Oi)** **Direct object (Od)**

He *paid* *her* *the dowry*
She *stabbed* *him* *the knife*
They *teach* *them* *a lesson*
It *tore* *me* *the shirt*
I *offered* *him* *a gift*

4. Subject **Predicator** **Subject complement (Cs) (nominal)**

He *is* *a student*
She *was* *the principal*
I *am* *his brother*
They *are* *the participants*
It *is* *a bag*

5. Subject **Predicator** **Subject complement (Cs) (adjectival)**

She *is* *wonderful.*

6. Subject **Predicator** **Adverbial**

Moji *is* *in the kitchen.*

7. Subject **Predicator** **Direct Obj (Od)** **Object compl.**

His classmates *consider* *him a genius.*

8. Subj **Predicator** **Direct Obj (Od)** **Object complement(Co) (adj)**

Some soldiers *find* *such weapons useful.*

9. Subject **Predicator** **Direct object** **Adverbial**

Bola *put* *the utensils* *in the cupboard.*

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Study patterns 5 - 9 very carefully and construct 5 sentences each for each pattern.

5. Subject **Predicator** **Subject complement (Cs) (adjectival)**

1
2
3
4
5

6. Subject **Predicator** **Adverbial**

1
2
3
4
5

7. Subject **Predicator** **Direct Obj (Od)** **Object compl.**

1
2
3
4
5

8. Subj **Predicator** **Direct Obj (Od)** **Object complement(Co) (adj)**

1
2
3
4
5

9. Subject **Predicator** **Direct object** **Adverbial**

1
2
3
4
5

The *subject* and *predicator* etc., which make up each *pattern*, are obligatory parts. Each of them is required for the pattern to be complete. It means they are compulsory and they must be in the structure for it to be completed. Each of these patterns may be expanded by the addition of an appropriate *optional* (not compulsory) *adverbial* (i.e. an adverbial which is not obligatory like the adverbials in patterns 6-9). The following are examples of patterns with optional adverbials.

1. Subject	**Predicator**	**(Adverbial)**
The girl	*prayed*	*fervently.*

3. Subject	**Predicator**	**Indirect Obj (Oi)**	**Direct Obj (Od)**	**(Adv)**
We	*gave*	*Tinu the orange*		*for a purpose.*

6. Subject	**Predicator**	**Adverbial**	**(Adverbial)**
Moji	*is*	*in the kitchen*	*now.*

8. Subject	**Pred.**	**Direct Obj (Od)**	**Object Compl (Adv) (Co) (Adj)**
Some soldiers	*find*	*such weapons*	*useful here.*

Please note that the optional adverbials are put in brackets to show that they are optional and that their statuses are not the same as the ones without brackets. The optional adverbials are optional because a pattern is complete without it. There may be more than one optional adverbial in a basic simple sentence pattern as in the examples below. An optional adverbial is not restricted to just one position but may occur in various positions in the patterns as in the following:

Subject	**(Adverbial)**	**Predicator**	**(Adverbial)**
He	*usually*	*sleeps*	*on the table.*

What is important in this structure is that 'He sleeps'. The adverbials '*usually'* and '*on the table*' are therefore optional in the sense that we can do without them if we want. They have only succeeded in giving additional information. Below is another example.

Subject	**(Adverbial)**	**Predicator**	**(Adverbial)**
Soldiers	*sometimes*	*fight*	*with such weapons.*

In this sentence as well, what is important is the fact that '*soldiers fight'*. The adverbials '*sometimes'* and '*with such weapons*' are optional adverbials that we can do without. Have a look at another example:

(Adverbial)	**Subject**	**Predicator**	**(Adverbial)**	**(Adverbial)**
Yesterday	*she*	*came*	*to the hall*	*alone.*

Just like the last two sentences, the idea conveyed in the sentence is the fact that '*she came'*, whoever '*she'* was. The adverbials-'*yesterday'*, 'to the hall' and alone are optional adverbials which can be done away with at will.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

What are the pattern numbers of the last three sentences with optional adverbials?

Pattern 1

3.2 NON-BASIC SIMPLE SENTENCES

The non-basic simple sentences can be formed by altering the basic ones in various ways. The formation of the non-basic simple sentences from the basic ones usually involves the following two operations-'*insertion'* and '*movement'*.

3.2.1 MOVEMENT

By moving the *predicator* before the *subject* (and using a *rising intonation*) we change the basic simple sentences to non-basic as in the example below:

Subject	**Predicator**	**Adverbial**
Tunde	was	in the room.

The sentence above can be changed to -

Predicator	**Subject**	**Adverbial**
Was	*Tunde*	*in the room?*

In the sentence above, the predicator has been moved and it has been made to come before the subject. Hence we have a question arising out of the movement instead of a sentence. All basic simple sentences are *statements*. Once you reverse the structure and you have a question, it is no longer *basic*, it is *non-basic*.

3.2.2 INSERTION

You can get a non-basic simple sentence by inserting the item not within the *predicator* as in the example below.

Subject	**Predicator**	**Adverbial**	
Tunde	*was*	*in the room*	(positive)
Subject	**Predicator**	**Adverbial**	
Tunde	*was*	*in the room*	(negative)

3.3 NON-SIMPLE SENTENCES

Please note that non-basic is different from non-simple. The *non-simple sentences* of English involve combining two or more simple sentences and these are of three main kinds:

- Compound sentences
- Complex sentences
- Compound complex sentences

These have to do with the ways the source sentences are combined in the process of forming them.

A ***compound sentence*** is usually formed by combining the source sentences using a *conjunction* or *linker* such as '***and'***.

Source simple sentence

a. *The boys played the instruments*.

b. *The girls sang.*

Resulting compound sentence

The boys played the instruments and the girls sang.

A ***complex sentence*** is commonly formed by combining the source sentences using a *conjunction* such as '***when'*** as in the following:

Source simple sentences

a. *I went there at some time.*

b. *I met him then.*

Resulting complex sentence

I met him when I went there.

A ***compound-complex*** sentence is formed partly like a *compound sentence* and partly like a *complex sentence*. For example, if after forming the *complex sentence*:

I met him when I went there.

We use the conjunction '*and'* (as in a *compound sentence*) to combine it with the *simple sentence*

He asked me the question.

The result will be the *compound-complex sentence* :

I met him when I went there and he asked me the question.

SUMMARY

In this unit you have learnt that there are nine basic simple sentences in English:

1. Pattern 1 is subject/predicator
2. Pattern 2 is subject /predicator/direct object
3. Pattern 3 is subject/predicator/indirect object/direct object
4. Pattern 4 is subject/predicator/subject complement (nom)
5. Pattern 5 is subject/predicator /subject complement (adj)
6. Pattern 6 is subject/predicator/adverbial

7. Pattern 7 is subject/predicator/direct object/ object complement (nom)
9. Pattern 8 is subject/predicator/direct object/ object complement (adj)
10. Pattern 9 is subject/predicator/direct object/ adverbial
11. A compound sentence is usually formed by combining the source sentences using a conjunction or linker such as 'and'
12. A complex sentence is commonly formed by combining the source sentences using a conjunction such as 'when'
13. A compound sentence is usually formed by combining the source sentences using a conjunction or linker such as 'and'.

▪ UNIT 4 BASIC SIMPLE ENGLISH SENTENCE PATTERNS II

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, the basic simple sentences will be expanded using some words and some parts of sentences. The various items or sections in a sentence are referred to as 'elements of structure'.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Identify the nine basic simple sentence patterns in English
- Use the nine basic simple sentence patterns in English
- Write sentences using the nine basic simple sentences in English.

3.1 PATTERN 1 EXPANDED

Pattern 1 has just two obligatory parts and these are the *subject* and the *predicator*. Below are examples:

Subj	**Pred.**	**Subj**	**Pred.**	**Subj**	**Pred.**
Birds	*fly.*	*The room*	*stinks.*	*Petrol*	*burns.*
John	*fell.*	*He*	*died.*		

The subject is normally realised in actual simple sentences by *nouns*, *noun phrases* or *pronouns*. The predicator is realised by *verbs* or verb *phrases*. The examples listed above have *verbs*. Below are examples with *verb phrases*.

Subj	**Pred.**	**Subj**	**Pred.**
Birds	*can fly.*	*He*	*has died.*

Aremo (1995) notes that the commonest type of *pattern 1* is one in which the predicator (realised by a verb or verb phrase) expresses an action while the subject is realised by a *noun*, *noun phrase* or *pronoun* which denotes the persons or things that perform the action. With certain *verbs*, the *pattern 1* sentence does not say that the subject performs any action. Aremo (1995) notes the following:

1. *Birds fly* - the subject performs a action
2. *The room stinks* (says the subject is in a certain state or condition)
3. *Petrol burns* (says the subject –petrol has a certain property- (burns)
4. *John fell* (tells us that an event affected the subject)
5. *He died* (tells us that an event affected the subject)

We mentioned the fact that the *subject* is usually realised by *nouns*, *noun phrases* and *pronouns*. As a result of this, we shall discuss *nouns* briefly to remind ourselves of what they are and how they are used.

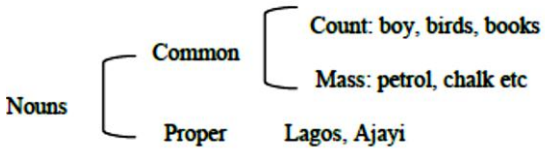
3.1.1 NOUNS

Nouns are words such as bird, room, petrol, things names of people and places etc. They are members of an *open class* (i.e. *indefinite*). New nouns are added to the class whenever they are required. All names are nouns. There are *common nouns* and *proper nouns. Common nouns* are nouns that can be used to refer to any example of a class of persons (boy/girl), places e.g. (town, stadium) etc.

Proper nouns are used to refer to particular persons and places e.g. John, Bola, Liberty stadium, Lagos etc.

There are two kinds of *common nouns- count nouns* and *mass nouns*. *Count nouns* refer to entities that are regarded as *countable* e.g. bird, boy etc. *Plural forms* - (boys, girls, goats etc). In the *plural*, most *count nouns* occur with an –s *suffix* added to the *base form* (which is the same as the singular form). Some others appear with e.g. – *es* as in *boxes*. Some appear with – *ies* as in *ladies* while some have no plural morpheme e.g. sheep. *Mass nouns* are common nouns referring to entities that are regarded as *uncountable* e.g. water and petrol. We can not count water or petrol but we may say *little water, little petrol, much water, a large quantity of petrol*.

With a proper noun, there is normally no need to distinguish between a *singular form* and a *plural form* because it does not refer to *countable things*. It is used to refer to particular persons or places etc. The noun subclasses are as follows:



3.1.2 NOUN PHRASES

A *noun phrase* is a sequence of words consisting of a *noun* and its *modifier* such as '*The man'* which is no longer a noun but a *noun phrase*. In the *noun phrase*, the *modified noun* is regarded as the *head* or *central word*. A *noun phrase* may consist of more than one *modifier*.

Please note the following about noun phrases:

1). The *article* '**the'** is a special *noun modifier* known as *determiners*

2). *Determiners* are members of a *closed class* (i.e. one whose membership is limited or fixed).

3). *Proper nouns* do not normally take any *determiner* e.g.

· ***The John fell***

This is an unacceptable sentence in English and that is why you have it preceded by a star. Once you see that star before any sentence, it means it is an unacceptable sentence in English. It is sad to note that we still find students who put *determiners* before *proper nouns*. It should not be so. You should pay attention to all these rules of English usage so that you will make fewer mistakes.

Another common *determiner* which students confuse at times is *'a (n)'*. The *determiner* is a before words beginning with a *consonant sound* e.g. '*a king'*, '*a town'* '*a dress'* etc, but it is an before words beginning with a *vowel sound* ('*an ox', 'an egg', 'an answer'* etc).

4). Unlike '*the'* which can be used with *singular count nouns*, *plural count nouns* and *mass nouns*, a(n) can only be used with *singular count nouns* i.e.: *the room, the birds, the petrol.*

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Write out ten words that can take 'a' as a determiner.
2. Write out ten words can take 'an' as a determiner.

1. router, king, computer, cap, gallon, window, lover, hall, bank, bike, dustbin

2. ant, examples, emblem, assignment, embryo, aviation emergency, immortal, inventor, island

3.1.3 PRONOUNS

*Pronouns are members of a closed class, like determiners. They are thus limited in number, and new members of the class are not normally formed. Commonly used pronouns are (I, we, you, she, it, they, and he (**personal**)). Each of these can be used as subject in the sentence like a noun phrase. The personal pronouns are so called because they are used by the speaker (or writer) to refer to one or other of the three kinds of entities, persons or things technically known as persons. These three entities are the first person – the speaker himself or herself, or the speaker and one or more others (I and We), the second person (the person (s) the speaker is addressing (You) and the third person (one or more other person (s) or things that are mentioned by the speaker.(He, She, It and They).*

3.2 PATTERN 2 EXPANDED

This pattern has three parts. Below are examples:

Subj	***Pred***	***Direc Object (Od)***
Birds	*lay*	*Eggs.*
Water	*caused*	*the problem.*
The woman	*cooked*	*Rice.*
Tinu	*thanked*	*John.*
She	*praised*	*him.*

The items used as predicators here are all verbs: lay, caused, cooked, thanked, praised. The item used as subject in each of the example sentences is a noun in examples 1, 2, 4, noun phrase in example 3 and pronoun in example 5. Optional adverbials can be used to expand the sentences. Below are examples:

1. (Of course), birds lay eggs.
2. (Actually), water caused the problem.
3. The woman (quickly) cooked rice.
4. Tinu (then) thanked John.
5. She praised him for the effort.

You will notice that adverbials have been added to the sentences above to expand them. This shows that adverbials are very important and that they are of different varieties. You should be able to construct sentences and good write-ups using these different sentence patterns so that your work can be an interesting one. ***(For more details of these expanded sentence patterns, see Aremo, 1997)***

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Go through the verbs listed here and construct pattern 2 sentences with them, one for each verb. Try to expand these sentences using optional adverbials of pour own 'work', 'play', 'dig', 'pull', 'destroy'.

- *They played the game perfectly*
- *It digs the holes gently*
- *She pulls the door strongly*
- *Soldier destroy enemies gradually*

3.3 PATTERN 3 EXPANDED

This pattern has four parts. The first two are again, the subject and the predicator. The remaining two parts are both objects an indirect object and then a direct object.

Subj.	***Pred***	***Indirect Object***	***Direct Object***
Teachers	*buy*	*the pupil*	*presents.*
Tinu	*brought*	*John*	*water.*
They	*showed*	*visitors*	*the cave.*
God	*sent*	*them*	*Manna.*
The move	*gave*	*music*	*a boost.*

The predicators in the *actual sentences* are all *verbs*: buy, brought, showed, sent, gave. The *subject* or *direct object* is in each case a *noun*, a *noun phrase* or a *pronoun*. The *indirect object* is also realised by a noun in 2, 3 and 5, a *noun phrase* in example 1 or a *pronoun* in example 4.

Pattern three sentences can also be expanded with optional adverbials. Below are examples.

- *Teachers (often) buy the pupil presents.*
- *Tinu brought Kunle water (in the morning).*
- *They (usually) showed visitors their wedding album.*
- *(Then) God sent them Manna.*
- *The move (really) gave music a boost*.

You can enrich your writing by varying your sentence patterns.

3.4 PATTERN 4 EXPANDED

Pattern 4 has three parts; subject, predicator and subject complement (nominal)

Subj	**Pred Subj**	**Complement (nominal) Cs (nom)**
Birds	*are*	*animals.*
The winner	*was*	*I.*
Water	*seems*	*a problem.*
The name	*became*	*John.*
It	*is*	*bread*.

The subject in each case is a noun, a noun phrase or a pronoun. The items realising the predicator are all verbs. The subject complement (*nominal*) is realised in the examples by a noun in examples (1,4,5) a *noun phrase* in example 3 or a pronoun in example 2.

Examples of pattern four sentences expanded with optional adverbials are listed below. What have been included are the *optional adverbials*.

- *(In a sense), birds are animals.*
- *The winner was (always) I.*
- *Water seems a problem (in town).*
- *The name (later) became John.*
- *(Of course), it is bread*.

Please note that most of the examples here are from Aremo 1997 and for details of the expanded forms, see Aremo 1997.

3.5 PATTERN 5 EXPANDED

This pattern also has three parts. The parts are subject, predicator and subject complement (adjectival)

Subj	**Pred**	**Subj Comp (adjectival) Cs(adj)**
Birds	*are*	*beautiful.*
The boy	*looks*	*kind.*
Water	*appears*	*scarce.*
The name	*became*	*very popular.*
The pot	*remained*	*hot.*

This pattern is very important because adjectives and adjective phrases function as subject complement. Adjectives and adjective phrases commonly specify the qualities or characteristics of persons or things. Below are some pattern five sentences with optional adverbials.

- *Birds are (naturally) beautiful.*
- *(However), the boy looks kind.*

- *Water appears scarce (everywhere)*
- *The name (soon) became very popular throughout Lagos.*
- *The pot remained hot (for hours).*

3.5.1 ADJECTIVES AND ADJECTIVE PHRASES

Adjectives are open items. They are large in number some *common adjectives* include *bad, big, easy, fair, good, large, old poor, rich, small, strong, weak* etc. *Adjective phrases* may be formed by modifying an *adjective* with a word like very or too as in -

- *It is very large.*
- *The name became very popular.*
- *He seems too good.*

Modifiers like very and too are members of a closed class. They are known as intensifiers. This is because they commonly intensify or heighten the meaning of the head word. There are however some intensifiers which have more or less the opposite effect-lowering or weakening the meaning of the headword. Intensifiers of this later kind include- '*somewhat'*, '*rather'* and '*pretty'*:

It is — *rather*
Somewhat small.

She is pretty good. (not as good as you think)

In descriptive essays, you need the mastery of a lot of adjectives for your work to be interesting. For more on adjectives, see *Quirk et al 1985 and Aremo 1997.*

3.6 PATTERN 6 EXPANDED

This pattern has three parts- subject, predicator and adverbial. We have mentioned some of the uses of adverbials in this unit in that they are what we use to expand the simple basic sentences. Examples are

Subject	**Predicator**	**Adverbial**
The birds	*are*	*in the cage.*
The boy	*was*	*here.*
The bread	*is*	*on the table.*
They	*appeared*	*in a hurry.*
John	*seems*	*in the mood.*

The items realising adverbial parts in this pattern can be adverbs and adverb phrases. These are used to supply various kinds of information in respect of time, place, manner etc.

You will notice that some of the adverbial phrases are preposition headed- that is, they have preposition starting them e.g. *in the room, at the door, on the table, in a hurry, beside the bed*. They are of two main kinds- simple prepositions (consisting of one word) and compound prepositions consisting of more than one word. The following are examples of simple prepositions- above, across, after, *against, among, around, at before behind, below, beneath, beyond, by down, during, from inside of, off, outside, over, past, since, than, through, throughout, to toward* (American) *towards* (British) *under, up, until, with, without*.

Some compound prepositions are: *along with, apart from, out of, together with, due to, because of, instead of.*

You need to master the use of these for cohesion in your work.

Patterns seven, eight and nine can also accommodate optional adverbials. Even though pattern nine has obligatory adverbials, it can still accommodate optional adverbials. For details, *see Aremo 1997.*

UNIT 5: CONCORD

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Concord is a major problem for some second language learners of English. It is even evident in some people's spoken language. No matter how interesting a lecture or presentation may be, if it is full of concord errors, the audience may loose concentration. Even if it is a sermon, if you are not careful as a preacher, you may not get the desired effect of your preaching on the congregation. This therefore makes this unit on concord an all-important unit in this course.

As mentioned earlier, concord is the formal agreement in person, number, gender or tense between two or more parts of a sentence. It is

formal in the sense that the use of one necessitates the use of another.

For example in the present tense of the verb 'to be', 'I' can only be

combined with 'am', and vice versa. This may be called bilateral concord. Also, 'we' can only be combined with 'are' in the present

tense.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Identify the concord relationships in specified sentences
- Construct sentences without concord errors.

3.1 CONCORD RELATIONSHIPS

Aremo (1995) notes that the rule of concord between the subject item and the predicator item goes thus:

A *singular subject* is used with a *singular predicator.*

A *plural subject* is used with a *plural predicator.*

Example:

1. a noun phrase with a singular count noun as headword e.g.

The man sings well.
The woman dances well.

2. a mass noun or a noun phrase with a mass noun as headword e.g

Petrol burns easily.
The water looks dirty.

3. a proper noun e.g..

Bola helps us sometimes
John visits us often.

4. any one of the third person singular pronouns –he, she and it (commonly substituted for one or other of the items mentioned in 1-4 above.

She dances well.
It burns easily. It cries often.
Looks dirty. sings beautifully.
She visits us often/She helps us often

In matters of subject/predicator concord, mass nouns and proper nouns are treated as singular nouns.

A plural subject means one realised by:

1. a plural count noun or a noun phrase with a plural count noun as headword

Boys — *like rice*
The boys

2. any of the plural personal pronouns- we, you and they

We
You — *eat yam regularly.*
They

Thus we have sentences such as:

He eats - singular predicator

They eat - plural predicator

Aremo (1995) notes that there is what he refers to as singular concord between the subject and the predicator - i.e.

The boy eats yam daily.

(singular subject + singular predicator)

Plural concord

The boys eat yam daily

(plural subject + plural predicator)

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Construct five sentences with singular subjects. Make the subject of two of them to be nominal groups, that is, more than one item. E.g. *'the boy'* as opposed to '*boy'* which is one item.

3.1.1 CONCORD OF PERSON

This occurs between a noun or pronoun and the pronouns referring to it, e.g.

He, she, it goes *My brother thinks*

Unilateral concord of person occurs between a subject in the first or second person singular, or in one of the three persons of the plural, e.g.

I, (you, we, they) go

Some say

His parents live

I, he,(she, etc) was

You (we, they etc) were

In descriptive sentences, both the subject-pronoun and the verb agree in number i.e.

They are very nice people.

Are those your children?

It is they who arrange everything.

PLURAL NOUNS

Sometimes, a *noun* in the *plural form*, more or less distinctly denotes a *singular* idea. For example, names of games – billiards, dominoes, draughts etc are all in the *plural form*. You can have sentences such as the following:

· *Billiards is not exclusively a men's game.*

· *Draughts is not entirely a game of mathematical calculation.*

A *plural subject* may consist of two or more *coordinated pronouns* in the singular, e.g.

· *John and Mary have gone.*

When two coordinated nouns form a semantic unit, the verbal predicate may take a singular form e.g.

· *A cart and horse was seen at a distance.*

· *The United States of today is nine times as large as the United States of 1800*

· *Is the United States imperialist?*

3.2 NUMBER CONCORD

The rule of number *concord* (being both singular or plural) between the subject and the predicator only applies when the verb used as predicator is in the present tense, it does not apply when the verb is in the past tense. Thus we have sentences such as:

· *The boy goes there everyday.*

· *The boys go there everyday.*

With a past tense verb, we have sentences such as:

· *The boy went there everyday.*

· *The boys went there everyday.*

You will notice that the past tense of the verb go which is went is the same for both singular and plural. The concord relationship between the subject and the predicator is only emphasised with the present forms i.e. *go /goes.*

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Construct five sentences each with the present and past forms of the verbs you choose. Each pair of sentences should indicate the number concord for both singular and plural.

1. *The student **writes** the note*
   *The students **write** the note*
2. *The computer **shows** the result*
   *The computers **show** the result*
3. *She **is** reading the book*
   *They **are** reading the books*
4. *He **highlights** the points to him*
   *They **highlight** the points to them*
5. *The shoemaker **makes** the shoes*
   *The shoemakers **make** the shoes*

3.2.1 SINGULAR NOUNS

Singular nouns denoting a number of individuals take a plural verb when the persons composing the group are thought of individually, a singular verb when the group is thought of collectively, e.g.

*The crowd **were deeply affected.***

*An immense crowd **was** assembled.*

*My family **are** early risers.*

*His family **was** an old one.*

*The majority of the stickers **are** already resuming work.*

*The government majority in the lower house **was** perilously small.*

Aremo 1995 notes that the equational verb –'***Be'*** is the most unusual verb in English. It can be found in more forms than any other verb. Other verbs have a single past tense form but '***Be'*** has two—i.e. ***was/were***. Other verbs have two present tense forms, '***Be'*** has three i.e. ***am, is, are***. The use of any of these forms depends on the kind of item. (singular count noun/ plural count noun) Like other verbs, '***Be'*** as predicator must be in concord with the subject item. Please note that even though it was earlier stated that the rule of number concord between subject and predicator only applies when the verb is used in the present tense, with the verb '***Be'***, it is different. It affects both the *past* and the *present forms*. As a result, '*is'* (***present***) and '*was'* (*past*) are regarded as *singular verbs*. Below are examples:

The girl } *is now a University student.*
She }

The man } *was a rogue.*
He }

'*Are'* (present) and '*were'* (past) are plural verbs used with plural subjects. i.e.

The women } *are nursing mothers.*
They }

The women } *were nursing mothers.*
They }

It is important to note that 'I' (singular pronoun) is used as subject with 'am' (present) and 'was' (past). i.e.

***** *I am now a business man.* ***** *I was once a business man*

You should also note that subjects realised by '***you'*** (singular or plural) are used. With are (*present*) and were (*past*).

· Singular - *You are now a teacher.*

· Plural - *You were once teachers.*

4.0 SUMMARY

1. A *singular subject* is used with a *singular predicator*.
2. A *plural subject* is used with a *plural predicator*.
3. In *descriptive sentences*, both the *subject* and the *verb* agree in *number*.
4. *Singular nouns* denoting a *number* of individuals take a *plural verb* when the persons composing the group are thought of individually,
5. *Plural nouns*, in spite of its *plural form*, more or less distinctly denote a *singular* idea.
6. The educational *verb* –'***Be'*** is the most unusual verb in English
7. Other verbs have two present tense forms, '***Be'*** has three i.e. ***am, is, are***.
8. Other verbs have a single past tense form but '***Be'*** has two—i.e. ***was / were***.

MODULE 2

UNIT 1 - PARAGRAPHS AND PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sentences make up a paragraph and paragraphs make up an essay or a composition. Paragraphs are used to express thoughts and there are two aspects of a good paragraph- the thematic and the structural aspects.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Identify the essential features of a good paragraph
- Write coherent paragraphs on any chosen essay topic or composition.

3.1 THEMATIC ASPECT OF A PARAGRAPH

Three things are important while discussing the theme of a paragraph and these are *unity, coherence* and *emphasis*.

3.1.1 UNITY

One of the essential features of a paragraph is unity. To achieve this, a paragraph must deal with one central theme. This theme is what will be fully developed through the other sentences in the paragraph. All the sentences in a paragraph must be related to the theme that the paragraph is emphasising. Occasionally, writers get carried away with an aspect of the *central theme* of a *paragraph* to the extent that they digress. This digression may eventually make their write-up or paragraph uncoordinated or disjointed. You must guide against this. Below is an example of a paragraph that lacks unity:

> The management committee at its meeting on December 8th agreed that the personnel manager should be instructed to employ more staff. The committee also recommended that the canteen be closed down because of poor management. The managing director complained about the leaking tap in his personal office. The management committee booked an appointment for a visit with the Managing Director.

This paragraph violates paragraph unity in that all the sentences look like topic sentences which could be fully developed in separate paragraphs each. **Sentence 1** talks about the actions of the committee. **Sentence 2** talks about another action of the committee which looks unrelated to the first. **Sentence 3** is not about the actions of the committee at all. Instead, it is about the complaints of the managing director concerning the leaking tap in his personal office. The paragraph looses its unity further here. The last sentence also mentioned one of the actions of the committee. Go through the paragraph below which is an example of a paragraph that has unity:

> The management committee on December 8th agreed that the personnel manager should be instructed to employ more staff. The management committee had been meeting for hours before they took some vital decisions concerning the company. The committee noted that the company had been short-staffed and that production had dropped drastically. The few members of staff had written a letter of protest on excess work load without pay to the management committee recently.

All the sentences in this paragraph have something to do with the central theme on the decision of the management committee. Actually, the first sentence is the topic sentence and the other three sentences when summarised express the need for more staff as a result of recent happenings in the company. **Sentence 2,** explains the fact that the committee had to meet for hours before the decision to employ more staff was taken.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Go through the paragraph below and say whether it has unity or not. Justify your answer.

Since compositions basically serve the purpose of communicating ideas, it is particularly important that they are written in simple and straight forward language. The vocabulary (i.e. the words used) should not be unnecessarily difficult. Common, everyday words if they are equally effective should be preferred to the rarely used ones. We should not aim at sending the audience to the dictionary with every word. And the sentences used should generally be as short as possible: none of them should be so long and involved that it becomes a major task getting at the meaning it seeks to express. We impress no one, but perhaps ourselves, when our composition fails as a piece of communication. *Aremo (2001:02)*

This paragraph violent paragraph unity in that all sentence like topic sentence which could be fully developed in separate paragraph each. Sentence 1 talks about composition. While sentence 2 talks about functions of the word; sentence 3 sharing of dictionary words. Sentence 4 talks about sentences formation.

3.1.2 COHERENCE

Another quality of a good paragraph is coherence. This has to do with having the parts of a paragraph in a meaningful order. The ideas presented in a paragraph must be orderly and understandable. There must be a logical sequence of ideas. These can be attained through the use of conjuncts or transitional words such as however, nevertheless, in addition, consequently, indeed, finally, as a result, in spite of, in contrast to, again etc. Coherence can also be achieved through the precise use of pronouns to avoid repetition of some nouns. The third way by which coherence can be achieved is through the repetition of specific ideas, although not necessarily the same words or phrases. You should try to avoid sentences that start with 'This is because The pronoun '*this'* could be vague in such sentences.

3.1.3 EMPHASIS

Emphasis is another quality that a paragraph can have which can give it *paragraph unity*. This can be achieved through the use of contrasting sentences, and repetition of ideas. Look at the passage below and discuss how emphasis has been used to drive home the writer's point.

Delivery is deemed to have taken place when the vehicle is taken over at the workshop by the customer or his authorised representative. In case of delivery at a place other than the workshop, this is at the customer's risk. If the customer fails to take delivery within 7 days of being notified that the vehicle is ready, a garage fee is chargeable. Despatch of the invoice to the customer shall be deemed to be notification that the vehicle is ready for delivery. ***(Extract from; The use of English a Text (Department of English OAU pg 193).***

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Write a well-constructed paragraph of about 150 words on any of the following topics.

1. My future career
2. My favourite film star

3.2 STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF A PARAGRAPH

A paragraph is a composite whole which should include at least three of the following parts-topic sentence, development, documentation, application or conclusion (if it is an only paragraph or a last paragraph in a write up).

3.2.1 THE TOPIC SENTENCE

A paragraph deals with one main idea which should be relevant to what the whole essay is all about. This main idea is contained in the topic sentence. The other sentences should be closely connected with the topic sentence and this gives the paragraph its unity and internal consistency. The topic sentence need not be the very first sentence. The writer may decide to discuss an issue first and then conclude towards the end by putting the topic sentence last.

3.2.2 PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT

Paragraph development is closely linked with the writer's thought processes and concepts. Logical processes are involved in the presentation of arguments and ideas. The kind of statements we write should be determined by your perception of the truth, verifiable facts, objectivity and relevant details of what we hope to present. A paragraph should not be developed haphazardly and you should be careful of unnecessary generalisations and fallacies.

1. 'Exercise is good; therefore, everybody should exercise'

This statement is fallacious because, a person suffering from a heart disease is always advised not to do exercises.

2. 'If I had not taught you to write, you would never have learnt anything about writing'

The statement above is also fallacious because somebody else would have taught him/her to write.

You must try to develop your paragraphs based on substantiated facts. A paragraph can also have evidence of documentation or application of some kind. In whatever way any of these parts feature in your work, you should try to make sure they are well presented. For example if you are doing some documentation, you should make sure that the references are included and that contribution are acknowledged where necessary. The following passage contains certain fallacies and illogicalities. Can you identify them?

Students should be allowed to look at their textbooks during examinations. After all, surgeons have x-rays to guide them during an operation; lawyers have briefs to guide them during a trial; carpenters have blueprints to guide them when they are building a house. Why then shouldn't students be allowed to look at their textbooks during an examination? Extract from; The Use of English a Text *(Compiled by the Department of English, OAU pg 180)*

PARAGRAPH OPENING

The way you start your paragraph is very important. The strategy to use depends on the subject matter. The language also depends on the purpose of the write up. If it is a magazine article, the language may be different from when it is a formal essay for presentation as a proposal. You could start by defining a concept that you hope to write on or the explanation of an idea.

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

The concluding paragraph is as important as the opening paragraph. Many people conclude by summarising the main points so that the reader would be reminded of the writer's line of thinking or argument as the case may be. A lot however depends on the subject matter.

4.0 SUMMARY

1. Paragraphs are used to express thoughts,
2. The two aspects of a paragraph are theme and structure,
3. One of the essential features of a paragraph is unity,
4. A paragraph must deal with a central theme,
5. A paragraph must not violate paragraph unity,
6. Another quality of a good paragraph is coherence,
7. Coherence has to do with having parts of a paragraph in a meaningful order,
8. Coherence can be achieved through the use of conjuncts and transitional words such as however, nevertheless, in addition, consequently, indeed, as a result etc.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Write a paragraph of about 100 words on any of the topics listed below. The topic sentence should appear in the paragraph but not necessarily at the beginning.

1. Rebellion is a vice in the youth of nowadays.
2. What I'll do if I am made the president of Nigeria.
3. Internet services are a blessing to humanity.
4. I would rather have a male child than a female child.
5. The prospect of a good job is refreshing to the soul.
6. Banks offer a wide range of services to their customers.
7. Living in a village could be advantageous.
8. Daily exercise is essential to everyone's health.
9. Should capital punishment be introduced as a way of curbing societal vices?

UNIT 2 THE GRAMMAR OF PARAGRAPHS I

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Unlike spoken language which has a number of devices through which we can identify long and short pauses or variations in tone that can help us determine the meaning of utterances, written language depends heavily on punctuation for meaningful interpretation. King (2000:156) sees punctuation as:

a system capable of conveying force, intonation, urgency,

tension doubt, rhythm and passion, while ever abandoning its duty to consistency and clarity of meaning

Quirk et al. (1985) notes that there are two principles underlying the punctuation system and these are separation and specification. Details of these can be seen in Quirk et al (1985). See the reference at the end of this unit. In the content section we shall deal with the different kinds of punctuations and their uses.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Punctuate sentences using appropriate punctuation marks
- Identify the different punctuation marks in any written discourse.

3.1 PUNCTUATION IN ENGLISH

The main purpose of punctuation marks is to give your writing a meaning by helping you to present your ideas in clear, well demarcated sentences. Punctuation marks should not be used indiscriminately. They should be used when necessary. Some people are heavy punctuators while some are light. Legal language may require heavy punctuation while common writings such as letters may require light punctuation. Even though there are some underlying principles you must follow to be well understood, punctuation could also be a matter of personal taste. Below are some common punctuation marks in English:

3.1.1 THE FULL STOP (.)

The full stop or period is an important punctuation mark in English. It is surprising that many people write without putting full stops at the end of their sentences. If you write and you do not put a full stop or you forget to put a full stop, it means you have not ended that sentence. It means you still want to continue that sentence because there is nothing like the longest sentence. You can keep on writing and as long as you put the appropriate linkers, you can write a sentence as long as a whole room. In essence, what I am trying to say is that you should always remember to put a full stop when you think you are through with a sentence. The full stop could be used in the following ways

a. For marking the end of a statement e.g.

1. *She danced.*
2. *The boy and girl washed their clothes in the water, fetched two buckets of water and went home to cook for their parents.*

b. For marking the end of a command e.g.

1. *Come immediately.*
2. *Stop shouting.*
3. *Answer the question clearly and directly.*
4. *Please go straight to the point.*

c. For indicating abbreviations

i) Acronyms e.g.

1. *O.A.U (Organisation of African Unity)*
   (Obafemi Awolowo University)
2. *U.N (United Nations)*
3. *D.G (Director General)*

The full stop is however optional here, we may also have OAU, DG, UN without the periods.

ii) A person's initials e.g.

1. *J.J Okon*
2. *M.A Olateju*
3. *T.O Ajayi*

The full stop is also optional here. It is therefore possible to write- JJ Okon, MA Olateju or TO Ajayi

iii) Abbreviations on the model of the following:

1. *Vol. (Volume)*
2. *Gen. (General)*
3. *Jan. (January)*

The full stop is omitted here only when the last letter of the abbreviation is also the last letter of the word. For example - Mr(.) Mister, Dr(.) Doctor.

3.1.2 THE QUESTION MARK (?)

The question mark is another important punctuation mark in English. It can be used in the following ways:

a. To mark the end of a question e.g.

1. *When are you coming?*
2. *What is your father's name?*
3. *Is it true that Kunle has won a scholarship*?

The examples above are the conventional ways of asking questions. The question mark can also be used to mark the end of a statement with a high intonation in form of a question e.g.

1. *He is coming tomorrow?*
2. *You came home with him from the airport?*

Please note that it is usual to mark with a full stop the end of question used to give an order or make a request e.g.

1. *Will you please shut the door*.

But also:

2. *Will you please shut the door?*

Please note also that you do not have to put a full stop after the question mark again because it already has a stop below the curve.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Punctuate the following sentences

1. *I will go to Lagos tomorrow*
2. *What is your Celtel Number*
3. *Give me your notebook now* (with a rising tone)
4. *What of the ball point I told you about*
5. *The weather is fine today*

1. I will go to Lagos tomorrow.
2. What is your Celtel Number?
3. Give me your notebook now. *(*with a rising tone*)*
4. What of the ball point I told you about?
5. The weather is fine today.

3.1.3 THE EXCLAMATION MARK (!)

The exclamation mark is normally used at the end of an exclamation; something of a great surprise on the negative or the positive side e.g.

1. *How wonderful!* 2. *Exciting*! 3. *Man, this is awful*!

Please note that the exclamation mark may also be used to mark the end of a vigorous command, statement or question. These are produced in the spoken form with a raised voice. Where the vigorous commands, statements and questions are rendered as they should, the response is always immediate.

I once had the opportunity of teaching a group of students this aspect of English and a set of students who came late to the class were just entering the class when I said Get out! as an example of a vigorous command. The students who were already at the

door wanting to come in went back immediately. The other students inside the class room burst into laughter and one of them went to call them in telling them I was not referring to them but that I just gave an example of a vigorous command. So it can be very effective if well rendered.

- **Vigorous command**
  1. *Get out!*
  2. *Close the window!*
  3. *Kneel down there!*
- **Vigorous statement**
  1. *I will not answer you!*
  2. *You met the window closed!*
  3. *I am coming tomorrow!*
- **Vigorous question**
  1. *What did you just say!*
  2. *Are you alright at all!*
  3. *What do you want!*

3.1.4 THE COMMA (,)

The comma is, apart from the full stop, the most frequently used punctuation mark. It is commonly used -

a). For marking out the end of the first two clauses linked by a coordinator in a compound or compound complex sentence, particularly when the coordinator is but.

1. *He came, but his presence was not felt.*
2. *He passed, but his mother was not pleased with his grades*.
3. *The students at NOUN really love their work, and they have a great deal of admiration for their hard working instructors.*

In each of the sentences above, there are two clauses. In sentence 1 for example, *He came* is a *clause*. *His presence was not felt* is another *clause*. But is a *coordinating conjunction* separating the *first clause* from the *second*. The same thing applies to the other sentences. The *comma* marks out the end of the *first clause*. However, a *comma* does not need to appear after the *first clause* if both *clauses* have *identical subjects* or if the sentence as a whole is extremely short e.g.

She greeted him and (she) smiled.

In the sentence above, she is the subject of the *first clause*- she greeted him.

The *second clause* has only the *predicator* but she is put in bracket to show that the subject of the second *clause* is *ellipted*. That is, when you read the sentence you do not have to read the *ellipted* subject along. The sentence should read:

She greeted him and smiled

b. For marking out items (words, phrases, or clauses coordinated in series).

- **Words** e.g.

1. *If you like**,** you can sing, dance, jump and roll on the ground.*
2. *Bola gave me some beautiful, precious, designer shoes.*

- **Phrases** e.g.

1. *The man bought two he-goats, five bags of beans, six gallons of groundnut oil*(,) *and a hundred big yams.*

- **Clauses** e.g.

1. *He jumped down, (he) danced a little, (he) picked up the dirty* note (,) *and* (he) *went away still dancing.*

You will notice that the *words*, *phrases*, and *clauses* in *italics* follow each other and they are separated by the *comma*. The subjects in the *bracket* are *ellipted*. They are only put there to show you what the *clauses* would look like if the siubjects were to be repeated. Please note that the *comma* preceding the *coordinator* between the two final items is optional except when its omission would lead to a mis-reading of the sentence. Although for stylistic purpose, at times you can have cases where no coordinator is used as in:

They can, they will, they must.

c. For separating adverbials (conjuncts, disjuncts and adjuncts)

3.2 CONJUNCTS

Conjuncts can be said to serve the primary purpose of indicating a meaning connection between *sentences* in a piece of spoken or written language. They are very important connective devices that a student needs to know about and be prepared to use. *Conjuncts* separate like *conjunctions*. They may serve to *link* like the components of a *sentence* but can do more than that. A *conjunct* takes off where a *conjunction* leaves off. Some commonly occurring conjuncts are- *however, nevertheless, moreover, furthermore, what's more, in addition, in fact, in brief, in sum, indeed, all the same, in other words, by the way, as a result, by contrast, on the other hand, meanwhile* etc. While writing you may need to buttress your points by using some specific words for stylistic effect and conjuncts can be right at hand to provide such effect. For more on *conjuncts*, see Quirk et al, 1985. You can also read the editorial articles of some broadsheet newspapers. Below are examples of conjuncts in sentences:

- ***However**, those are the visitors to expect.*
- *Those, **however**, are the visitors to expect.*
- *Those are the visitors to expect, **however**.*

Shifting the word may involve a shifting of emphasis, a different intonation, a different focusing of the message. Placing a connector in a particular place may mean you are doing some stylistic work on the sentence or language piece.

- **Conjuncts (phrases)** - Conjuncts may be in phrases as in the examples below. They can be at the beginning, middle or end. Just as mentioned earlier, shifting the positions of conjuncts means shifting the position of the comma and emphasis.
  - ***In other words**, we were fully occupied.*
  - *We were, **in other words**, fully occupied.*
  - *We were fully occupied, **in other words**.*
- **Conjuncts (clauses)** - Conjuncts could also be in clauses. Examples are:
  - ***To conclude**, they were all prepared for the great event.*
  - *They were, **to conclude**, all prepared for the great event*
  - *They were all set for the great trip, **to conclude**.*

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Punctuate the following sentences.

In Africa an important celebration like marriage is not a matter for the nuclear family alone the members of the extended family also participate actively

In Africa, an important celebration like marriage is not a matter for the nuclear family alone, the members of the extended family also participate actively.

3.3 DISJUNCTS

Disjuncts are *words, phrases* or *clauses* that express opposition of ideas. They are readily detachable, but serve to make some kind of comment on the ideas expressed.

- **Words** e.g.
  1. ***Naturally**, he hated having to speak to her.*
  2. *He, **naturally**, hated having to speak to her.*
  3. *He hated having to speak to her, **naturally**.*
- **Phrases** e.g.
  1**. *In all frankness**, he is the one I prefer.***
  2. *He is, **in all frankness**, the one I prefer.*
  3. *He is the one I prefer**, in all frankness.***
- **Clauses** e.g.
  1. ***To tell the truth**, we are not sure of him.*
  2. *We are, **to tell the truth**, not sure of him.*
  3. *We are not sure of him, **to tell the truth.***

3.4 ADJUNCTS

Adjuncts are words; phrases joined or added to an expression but are not a necessary part of it. They can also be words added to qualify or modify other words in a sentence. Some are adverbials. The most usual kinds of linking adjuncts are expressions of space and time.

- **Words** e.g.
  1. ***Tomorrow**, we shall all visit him.*
  2. *We shall, **tomorrow**, all visit him.*
- **Phrases** e.g.
  1. ***In those days**, that would be a taboo.*
  2. *That would, **in those days**, be a taboo.*

d. Commas can be used for separating vocatives (a noun or the special form of a noun used in some languages when addressing someone or something) e.g.

1. *Bola, listen to what I have to say.*
2. *Listen, my friend, to what I have to say.*

In all the examples given above, you will notice how the comma has effectively been used to give meaning relations to the expressions.

4.0 SUMMARY

1. The full stop or period is an important punctuation mark in English

2. It is usual to mark with a full stop the end of question used to give an order or make a request.

3. The question mark can also be used to mark the end of a statement with a high intonation in form of a question.

4. The comma is, apart from the full stop, the most frequently used punctuation mark

5. The comma can be used for separating adverbials (conjuncts, disjuncts and adjuncts)

3.1 THE COLON (:)

The colon is commonly used:

a. to link two clauses (the second being a restatement, an explanation or an expression of the first) within a compound or compound complex sentence e.g.

These men are a credit to their village and country: their good deeds will be remembered for long.

If you study the sentence above very well, you will notice that the second clause after the colon is an explanation of the first.

b. To introduce a list, in which case it is often preceded by *namely, such as*, etc e.g.

He spoke on several of the issues: shortage of liquid cash, poverty, injustice, unemployment, industrial unrest, and disease.

c. To introduce direct speech particularly in dramatic dialogue e.g.

He said: 'I am the president of this association'

d. To introduce a quotation as in e.g.

She was very fond of those immortal words by Shakespeare: 'Cowards die many times before their death'

3.2 THE DASH (-): The dash is used:

a. To mark off an informal insertion, particularly one with internal commas e.g.

The girls - I should in fact call them the call girls- have now taken up arms.

b. To introduce a list, when a less formal mark than a colon is required e.g.

She had all she wanted – sharpeners, rubbers, pencils, rulers, ink, bags, and paper.

c. To introduce a summary statement after a list e.g.

We bought pencils, rubbers, pens, ink, rulers and paper- in short, all we need.

A colon can replace the dash, I (c), but the colon will be considered more formal than the dash.

3.3 SEMI-COLON (;)

The semi colon is a heavier version of the comma but it is less frequently needed than the comma as a punctuation mark. Aremo 1995 notes that it is commonly used to -

a. Mark out the end of the first of two clauses linked by a coordinator in a *compound* or *compound complex sentence* e.g.

He was a very reasonable young man; nevertheless he found it but difficult to make it in life.

b. To link two or more clauses in a compound or compound – complex sentence e.g.

You certainly can come; it is everybody's affair.

c. To mark out the boundary between coordinated clauses or phrases with internal comma punctuation for the sake of clarity e.g.

The woman, whom you spoke highly of, came; and we were all very happy to see her.

3.4 BRACKETS (PARENTHESES) ( )

Brackets are used, like dashes and commas, to set off an informal insertion from the rest of the sentence:

It is said that mercenaries (I mean hired soldiers from other countries) are fighting on the side of the rebels

Please note that:

1. Brackets and dashes are used to show more clearly than commas the status of an informal insertion

2. Square brackets [ ] are used by a writer to enclose his own words inserted in a quotation to make its meaning clear e.g.

The students [Bola, Ajayi and Aina] have proved to the world what you are all capable of achieving.

3.5 QUOTATION MARKS OR INVERTED COMMAS (‘‘)

Quotation marks may according to preference, be single ‘’ or “”. They are used

a. To enclose direct speech e.g.

'In any case', said the principal, 'Mary is a good girl'.

'I'm happy you still can say such kind things about the little girl' said Mary's mother.

'He said: 'I am the land-lord here'

Please note that:

1. The two sets of quotation marks, one double and the other single are used for a quotation within a quotation e.g.

The witness said "He cried, 'where have you kept the money?'"

2. Direct speech in dramatic dialogue is enclosed in quotation marks:

b. To enclose quotation e.g.

She was very fond of those immortal words by Shakespeare: 'cowards die many times before their death'.

c. To enclose words or expressions that the writer does not wish to claim as his own e.g.

1. *As a child, she really believed that what she saw on the moon was 'a woman's beautiful face'*
2. *It is unbelievable that 'John told the chief to go to hell'*

c. To enclose words and expressions that are unfamiliar or that are used in a special, not generally accepted sense e.g.

1. *One can talk at length about this 'primitive' language.*
2. *It was all traceable to their leader's 'chop-chop' mentality.*

d. To enclose the titles of stories, poems, articles, etc or issued as separate publications e.g..

The Raiders' was published in his first collection of short stories.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Write out four uses of quotation marks and support your answer with good examples.

1. With Figurative Language: To tell readers that a word is used figuratively, you may enclose it in quotation marks.

*The neighborhood dogs held a **"meeting"** in the park every afternoon*

2. For Irony: A word may be placed in quotation marks to show that it is used ironically.

*The teenagers snickered at their teacher's **"stylish"** leisure suit.*

Before resorting to quotation marks to communicate irony, you must try to rephrase your sentence so that your words themselves establish the tone you want.

3. With Slang: Slang is also sometimes enclosed in quotation marks, but it is best to avoid using this device.

*I placed all his memos in my **"circular file"***

In most formal writing, you should not use slang at all (see Slang). If, however, you decide that only a slang expression truly captures your meaning, use it without the apology that quotation marks imply.

4. With Unfamiliar Words If you use a newly coined or technical word that your readers probably do not know, you may enclose it in quotation marks at its first use.

*Some brain disease may be spread by proteins called **"prisons"***

Be careful to set off a word only if it or the way you are using it is unfamiliar to most people. Even if a word is new, if it is in common use, quotation marks are not needed.

5. With Definitions and Translations: If you define a word in text, enclose the definition in quotation marks. The word itself should be set in italics. You can also use quotation marks to set off a translation of a foreign term or phrase.

*Reboot mean **"restart"***

REFERENCE:

- Encarta Encyclopedia 2009 DVD

3.6 ITALICS

In a hand written or typed manuscript, italics can be indicated through underlining. Italics are used:

a. For titles of books, magazines, newspapers and other works published separately e.g.

***** *The Daily times* ***** *The Guardian*

b. Titles of shorter works not issued as separate publications e.g.

Short stories and poems are enclosed in quotation marks

c. For foreign words or expressions used in a text e.g.

The *dramatis personae* are found on the first page

It was evening again and he was back at the remaining bottle of *ogogoro*

d. For words or expressions which the writer would like to be carefully noted e.g.

The *semi-colon* may be linked to two or more clauses

e. For items (words, phrases etc) illustrating a point of usage e.g.

1. *The man was here. (past tense)*
2. *The man is here. (present tense)*

3.7 THE APOSTROPHE ('): The apostrophe is used:

a. For indicating the genitive of some general pronouns e.g.

***** *somebody's dog* ***** *everybody's affair*

The apostrophe is not used for indicating the genitive of personal pronouns e.g. *my/mine her/hers your/ yours*

b. For indicating the genitive of nouns and noun phrases e.g.

***** *the girl's book* ***** *a child's toy* ***** *children's books*

c. For marking omissions in reduced words and numbers e.g.

I'll (= I will) *hasn't (= has not)*

It's (= It is) *We're (= We are -)*

d. For indicating the plurals of numbers, letters and cited words or expressions e.g.

There are two O's in 'book'

The 7's look like 1's *In the 1980's*

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Some of the sentences below need apostrophe. Put them where they should be.

1. It is hers.
2. Dr Ojo thesis is missing from the Library.
3. He hasn't been able to come back again.
4. I need some children story books.
5. Your's is very beautiful.

1. It's hers.
2. Dr Ojo's thesis is missing from the Library.
3. He hasn't been able to come back again.
4. I need some children's story books.
5. Your's is very beautiful.

3.8 THE HYPHEN: The hyphen is used to:

a. Show when a single word has been broken at the end of one line and completed on the next line e.g.

He came for the first time yesterday

Please note that the hyphen is placed at the end of the line on which the word is started not at the beginning of the following line.

b. To link the component bases of some compound words i.e.

***** *breath-taking* ***** *go-between*

Please note that not all compounds are written with a hyphen. Some are written solid e.g. dressmaking and some are written open- e.g. tear gas.

The same compound can sometimes be written in any of the three ways e.g. flower-pot, flowerpot, and flower pot.

c. To link the component words of a multi – word item used as a single pre-modifier e.g.

They were all seven -month -old –babies.

He adopted his usual- I don't care attitude.

d. To separate some prefixes from the base (particularly when the base begins with a capital letter or when the word could otherwise be mispronounced e.g.

***** *co-author* ***** *re-present (preset again)* ***** *pro-Iraq*

3.9 CAPITAL LETTERS (ABC)

These are used at the beginning of:

a. The first word of a sentence e.g.

***** *Today is her birthday.* ***** *You are all invited.*

b. All proper nouns(names of specific people, places etc and words derived from them e.g.

Bola Ojo, China, Sunday January, Independence day

Please note that with proper nouns, a capital is normally used only at the beginning of the open class items (nouns, adjectives, adverbs) e.g.

***** *(the) Department of English* ***** *(the) National Assembly*

The National Assembly members are two hundred in number

Words like committee, department, government state and university are spelt with a capital when they are part of the proper nouns or when they are used as substitute for the proper nouns but not when they are used as ordinary common nouns e.g.

The National Assembly is on recess.

A committee should be set up immediately.

The House Committee on petroleum matters recommended the removal of its chairman.

c. All titles preceding proper nouns or titles used as substitutes for proper nouns e.g.

Princess Aina, Chief Okonkwo, Miss Olabode,

The President, President Clinton

d.The first and the last word and each of the open class words (nouns, verbs etc) in the title of a book or article e.g.

The Beautiful Ones Are not Yet Born

Our Husband has gone Mad Again

e. Words of family relationship when used alone e.g.

Usually, Father does not like such display of arrogance but Mother only laughs at such.

Usually our father does not like such display of arrogance but our mother only laughs at such.

When used with the first name, the words are also spelt with a capital e.g.

I think Brother James will understand this.

James is a brother to Alice.

The personal pronoun 'I' is always written with a capital e.g.

I prefer to go to Marks and Spencer but I'll ask my fiancé to go with me.

Some other punctuation marks are the ellipsis (…) and the caret (^) and these are used to indicate omissions in a sentence

4.0 SUMMARY

1. The colon is used to link two clauses
2. The colon is used to introduce a list
3. In a hand written or typed manuscript, italics can be indicated through underlining
4. A hyphen is used to show when a single word has been broken at the end of one line and completed on the next line
5. An apostrophe is used for indicating the genitive of some general pronouns
6. The two sets of quotation marks, one double and the other single are used for a quotation within a quotation
7. Some other punctuation marks are the ellipsis (…) and the caret (^) and these are used to indicate omissions in a sentence.

UNIT 4 BEYOND THE SENTENCE 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The term '*Beyond the sentence'* is borrowed from Aremo 1997 and it is meant to refer to units of language that are bigger in size and structure than the sentence. In most of the earlier units, we dealt with individual sentences in English. We have also dealt a little with formation and origin of some peculiar words in English. In this unit, we shall move ahead and talk about sentences and how they relate with one another, their well formedness in discourse (that is in continuous speech or writing) which involves more than a sentence. It is important to note that it is not only important for a sentence to be well formed; it should also flow with other sentences in the group. In other words, it should fit in with every other sentence in its environment. Go through the example below.

Mr James was a good business man. He gave gifts to children at the school end of the year party.

Goats love raw yams. Congratulations on your newly acquired Volvo 940.

If you look carefully at the sentences above, each of them is well formed but the sentences taken together do not make sense. They look disjointed. They cannot form a unified whole. They cannot form a unified whole the way they are except they are re-written. Go through the sentences below and see if there is a difference between the sentences in the paragraph above and that below.

Mr James was a good business man. He gave gifts to children at the school's end of the year program. He loves rearing goats for sale but they always end up eating his yam stalks. His friends sent congratulatory messages to him on his newly acquired Volvo 940.

If you examine the set of sentences above, you will discover that they are coherent and intelligible in sequence. The sentences are interconnected in meaning and the events in one sentence seem connected with the next. The sentences refer to the same person-Mr James mentioned in sentence 1. Sentence 2 refers to part of his goodness by giving gifts to children at the end of the year party in his children's school. Part of his business acumen is revealed in sentence 3 in that he loves rearing goats for sale. In sentence 4, he bought a new Volvo 940 for which he was congratulated.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Mention the lexical connective devices for sentence connection
- Identify the connective devices in any given language use
- Use them appropriately in the construction of sentences and paragraphs.

3.1 SYNONYMY

This term is used to describe the relationship of similar *lexical* items or *lexemes*. It can be referred to as a relation of sameness of meaning. Aremo (1997) notes that, for two or more items to be regarded as *synonymous*, they do not have to be interchangeable in every context. According to him, the following synonym pairs – profound and deep, finish and end, start and begin can be substituted for each other in:

They all listened with { deep / * profound } interest

Let's { start / begin } the course

We shall { finish / end } the series next week.

They cannot be substituted for each other in –

They all swam across the { deep / profound } river

Let's { start / *begin } the engine

We shall { finish / *end } the job next week

Synonymous items may even differ in their connotation, that is, in the emotional associations that are suggested by them. For example the words statesman and politician though interchangeable, still differ in their connotation in that some people think that a statesman is associated with greater freedom from deceit.

Palmer1966 notes five ways in which words can differ from one another:

1. Sets of synonyms which belong to different dialects of the language e.g. Fall (US) Autumn (Britain).

2. Different degrees of similar situation require words that are used in different styles e.g. a nasty smell, an obnoxious effluvium, a horrible stink Pass away/ die/ pass on/ pop off.

3. Some words may be said to differ only in their emotive or evaluative meaning e.g. politician/statesman hide/conceal liberty/ freedom midget /dwarf mountain/ hill.

4. Some words are collocationally restricted - they occur in conjunction with other words e.g. rancid — goes with butter addled - goes along with eggs.

5. Some words are close in meaning/ their meanings overlap e.g.- mature, adult, ripe, perfect, due, govern, direct, control, determine, require, loose, inexact, free, relaxed, vague, lax, unbound.

As a writer, one has to choose the most appropriate synonym while writing. A sign in the San Diego zoo wild animal park states-

Please do not annoy, torment, pester, plague, molest, worry, badger, harry, harass, heckle, persecute, ink,bullyrag, vex disquiet, grate, beset, bother, tease, nettle, tantalise, or *ruffle the animals.*

It has often been said that there are no perfect synonyms but the following pair of sentences have very similar meanings:

He is sitting on a sofa. / He is sitting on the couch.

The degree of semantic similarity between words depends to a great extent on the number of semantic properties they share. For example, sofa and couch refer to the same type of object and most of their semantic properties.

3.2 ANTONYMS

This is a relationship of oppositeness in meaning. Just like synonyms, antonyms do not need to be substitutable for each other in all contexts. The following pairs of words are antonyms and can be substituted in some cases while they cannot be substituted in some other cases. Please note that these examples are from Aremo 1997. For more details see the reference at the end of this unit.

They can be substituted in –

It is a { long / short } pole.

We can { start / finish } the course now..

The man is { dead / alive }

They { sell / buy } old newspapers..

They can not in

He is a { short / *long } man.

We can { start / *finish } the engine now.

She told the story of the { dead / *alive } man.

They { sell / *buy } them the auction.

We become aware of these distinctions in language use through our exposure to the language. Just as we do not have perfect or absolute synonyms, there are no absolute antonyms as well. The linguistic context determines the usage and the appropriateness of a word. Antonyms are of different kinds- *complementary*, *gradable* and *relational opposites*.

3.2.1 COMPLEMENTARY PAIRS

Some opposite words are complementary to each other in English. They are complementary in the sense that not being this = that. e.g. *Alive/dead, Present/absent, Awake/asleep.*

This means that not *alive =dead,* not *dead=alive.*

At this point, the question can be asked of those who, for one reason or the other, have become what we call vegetables. That is they are only seen to be breathing, they cannot do any other thing. Some might even be in an unconscious state. Such people, even though they are not clinically dead, they are dead to their environment. If you are not present, you are absent. You cannot do the two together physically.

3.2.2 GRADABLE ANTONYMS

These kinds of words do not provide an absolute scale. With gradable antonyms, the negative of one word is not synonymous with the other. For example, someone who is not happy is not necessarily sad. Some adjectives fall into this category e.g.

Big /bigger /biggest
Hot/ warm /cool /cold
Big /small fast / slow happy / sad

Gradable antonyms are often found among sets of words that partition a continuum i.e.

Tiny-small-medium-large—huge- gargantuan

3.2.3 RELATIONAL OPPOSITES

These are words that are linguistically related in that they refer to a reversal of relationship between a pair of related items or kinship terms.

The items in this category are mutually exclusive e.g. *father/mother, brother/sister, buy/sell lend/borrow, give/receive, husband/wife, parent/child, doctor/patient, teacher/pupil.*

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the synonyms of the following words:

1. Expensive
2. Tradition
3. Advantages
4. Abandoned
5. Scolded
6. Commanded

1. Expensive - *luxurious*
2. Tradition - *customs*
3. Advantages - *virtues*
4. Abandoned - *discarded*
5. Scolded - *admonish*
6. Commanded - *directed*

3.3 HYPONYMY

This is a situation where there is a super-ordinate term. The general or super-ordinate term is the larger set that houses the other smaller ones. e.g.

Red, green, yellow, blue etc have their lexical representation as *'colour'* which is a super-ordinate term.

Lion, tiger, leopard, lynx (animal of the cat family, with *tufted ears* and a *short tail*) have their lexical representation as Feline (catlike, of the cat family).While writing, you may find out that you need to use these words. So a good mastery of these kinds of lexical devices is important.

Sometimes, there is no single word in the language that encompasses a set of hyponyms. Thus, *clarinet guitar, horn, marimba, piano, trumpet, violin* are hyponyms because they are '*musical instruments'* but there is no single word meaning 'musical instrument' that has these words as its hyponyms. The small elements are also referred to as co-hyponyms of the superordinate term. For example, *tulip, rose, hibiscus* are hyponyms of the term '*flower'*.

3.4 REPETITION

Repetitions are often for emphasise. Below is an example of an anonymous text with a lot of repetitions and antonyms.

As a rule, man is a fool
When it is hot, he wants it cool
When it is cool, he wants it hot
Always wanting what is not
Anonymous

The words wants wanting are repeated to emphasis part of human nature. 'When it is----'is also repeated to lay emphasis on the temporal aspect of man's demands. From the text we also have examples of antonyms- i.e. hot/cool which are gradable antonyms.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Write five pairs of words with their relational opposites.

1. *computer, CPU, keyboard, printer*
2. *spoon, plate, vacuum flask, cup*
3. *paper, pencil, biro, cleaner*
4. *Shirt, trouser, cap, watch*
5. *curtain, chair, mattress, carpet*

4.0 SUMMARY

1. *Lexical connective devices* include *lexemes* or *content words* such as (*nouns, verbs, adjectives* and *adverbs*) whose sense relations shed light on a reading text
2. Synonymy can be referred to as a relation of sameness of meaning
3. Antonyms are of different kinds- complementary, gradable and relational opposites.
4. Gradable antonyms do not provide an absolute scale
5. Relational opposites have items whose categories are mutually exclusive
6. In complementary pairs, what is present in one item is absent in the other
7. Gradable antonyms are often found among sets of words that partition a continuum

MODULE 3

UNIT 1 BEYOND THE SENTENCE II

1.0 INTRODUCTION

We shall discuss collocations and some grammatical connective devices. You will find some or all of them useful at one point in time or the other.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Mention the lexical and grammatical connective devices for sentence connection
- Identify the connective devices in any given language use
- Use them appropriately in the construction of sentences and paragraphs.

3.1 COLLOCATIONS

Collocations are the acceptable co-occurrence of lexical items in a sentence. Lexical items co-occur. Items that relate these ways are called *collocates*. The units involved depend on each other. There are two types of collocations- *free collocations* and fixed *collocations*.

3.1.1 FREE COLLOCATIONS

With free collocations, items co-occur naturally. e.g.

***** *Dog and bark* ***** *Fish and swim*
***** *Insect and fly* ***** *Butter and rancid* ***** *Fruit and rotten*

These lexical items are free in the sense that some other structural words can be added to them to make meaningful sentences with them. e.g.

Insects fly very high in the sky.
This *butter* has gone *rancid*.
The *rotten* mango *fruit* was thrown away.
Bring me two *big* and four *small* boxes from the store.
The *river flows* down the hill.

With free collocations words naturally go along with each other.

3.1.2 FIXED COLLOCATIONS

These are otherwise known as idiomatic expressions or simply idioms. Examples are-

- *a square peg in a round hole* (someone occupying a post not suited for him)
- *a storm in a tea cup* (excitement over a small matter)
- *a dog in a manger* (someone holding on to something that is not useful to him)

They are fixed in that you cannot insert any word in between these fixed collocations. The words are used in the order in which they are. For example you cannot say:

- *a dog in a green manger*
- *a storm in a big tea cup*
- *a big square peg in a round hole*

Some of these idioms have however become clichés and have almost gone out of use. An example is - *kick the bucket* which means '*die'*. Another type of fixed collocations in English are *phrasal verbs*. Where they occur in sentences in English, they appear and function like idioms. They pass specific messages across. An example is 'up the hill' i.e. '*up the hill task'* meaning that it is a *difficult assignment*.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Write five examples of sentences with free collocations.
Write five examples of sentences with fixed collocations.

FREE COLLACATIONS

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

FIXED COLLOCATIONS

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

3.2 GRAMMATICAL DEVICES FOR SENTENCE CONNECTION

Grammatical devices can be seen in terms of the following: conjunction, ellipsis, substitution, structural parallelism.

3.2.1 CONJUNCTIONS

Conjunction can be referred to as the connection of sentences into units of meaning in discourse. Quirk et al. (1985) notes that, conjunctions are of two types- *coordinating* and *subordinating conjunctions*. *Coordinating conjunctions* are known as coordinators while *subordinating conjunctions* are known as *subordinators*. The three major *coordinators* are *and*, *but* and *or*. In the following sentences:

1. *We all expected him on the D-Day, but he disappointed us by not coming*.
2. *She was physically challenged yet he loved her*.

The conjunction but and the conjunct yet express a form of concession and the fact that the sentences are connected.

Aremo 1997 notes that most of the meaning relationships expressed by the conjuncts are also expressed by one or other of the *coordinating conjunctions and, or, but*. And in particular can express *enumeration, reinforcement, summation, result* etc depending on the context. Below are examples of the various ways which the conjunction and can be used to express enumeration etc.

ENUMERATION

There were two reasons why he preferred the appointment. Its location was close by. *And* the remuneration was good.

REINFORCEMENT

Those were her young days. And they were her days of glory.

Summation We walked the beach together, sang choruses and played games. We even phoned our close friends during the picnic. *And* it was a very refreshing time.

RESULT

He lifted the iron lid. *And* the bees buzzed out in their thousands.

'*Or'* is used for '*reformulation'* and 'replaIcement'. e.g.

REFORMULATION

She was very tall. *Or* (rather) she was the tallest girl around.

REPLACEMENT

You could see your mother about it. Or you could see the doctor.

'*But'* is used for '*contrast'* or '*antithesis'* and '*concession'*. E.g.

CONTRAST/ANTITHESIS

He looks like a gentle man. *But* he is a crook to the core.

CONCESSION

He was very lazy. *But* all the teachers thought that he was one of the most diligent boys in the school.

'For' is a conjunction used to indicate a relationship of justification (or *reason/cause*) e.g.

The stories all taught the children the need for hard work. For the ants in the stories were hard-working.

The items neither, nor and either can also indicate some meaning relationships indicated by and (e.g. reinforcement and result) They are however normally used for connecting negative sentences with negative implications. e.g.Please note the following as observed by Aremo 1997

a. With *neither* or *nor* there is subject /operator inversion and the negator '*not' is* not retained. e.g.

He *did not* …. this either, …… neither *did he*

b. While neither and nor (like *and* or *but*, occur only in the initial position in their sentence, either occurs only in the final position.

c. *Neither, nor, or* either may be combined with *and* or *but* to link a sentence with the preceding one. e.g.

And { *neither* / *nor* } did the bees buzz out in their thousand

And the bees did not buzz out in their thousands

3.3 IDENTIFICATION

Identification involves the use of certain determiners to point out the relationship between certain items that have been mentioned earlier in a sentence. It is used within and across sentences e.g.

He gave us the example of a man who travelled to the moon long ago. According to him, the man came back after three weeks of exploring the moon.

The determiner '*the'* in the noun phrase the man is co-referential with an earlier noun phrase *a man*. The determiners that are used in identification are the definite article the and the demonstratives- *this /these, that /those* e.g.

He married *a woman* of honour. *That woman* was like a mother to him.

Some of the questions he asked were on poverty alleviation. Those questions were never answered by the minister. Identification determiners *the/this* at times do not occur alone. They occur with some other pre-modifying items such as same, very, former, latter, first, second, (or some other numerals in the ordinal series) and last using the determiners with items like same, very has the effect of emphasising the co reference of their noun phrase e.g.

A man can eat like a glutton this week, next week,

this { very / same } the many may go on three days prayer and fasting

3.4 STRUCTURAL PARALLELISM

This device is of value in sentence connection in that it normally suggests that there is some meaning relationship (contrast or similarity) between sentences with parallel structures. This device involves giving identical structures or forms to two or more sentences or parts of the same sentence within the same sentence:

Bola was taught *to work*, to pray and *to hope*.

Across sentences-

The villagers *had hoped* Jagun would be well. They *had prayed* he would be willing.

3.5 SUBSTITUTION

This involves the use of preforms and pronoun preferences as replacements for particular words in a sentence. Examples of preforms include- *same, so, too, any both, each, neither, some, none* etc. Examples of pronouns *are he, him, she her, hers, my mine, we, their, theirs, them* etc. Substitutions prevent repetition and for details of these, ***see Quirk et al 1985***. The following are just a few examples of the different parts of a sentence that can be substituted. Almost every part of a sentence can be substituted.

Bola and *Tinu* went out. They bought sweets and biscuits for their younger sisters. (The subject- *Bola* and *Tinu* is substituted with They)

Feranmi *sings well*. Tinu does so too. (whole predicate– *sings well* in the first sentence is substituted by *does so* in the second sentence)

For other examples of parts of a sentence that can be substituted, see Quirk et al. 1985 and Aremo 1995

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Write three examples of sentences in which substitution is demonstrated. You can give examples of where some other parts of a sentence is substituted.

1.
2.
3.

3.6 ELLIPSIS

Ellipsis is the omission of linguistic items which have been realized elsewhere in the sentence. It is like substitution in that it is used to avoid repetition. In substitution, the item is replaced by another item (i.e proform) In ellipsis, it is replaced by nothing. Ellipsis can also be used within and across sentences e.g.

He *bought* one and his wife two.

'*Bought'* used in the first clause has been *ellipted* from the second clause i.e

He *bought* one and his wife (*bought*) two.

Please note that in all the examples of the different kinds of ellipsis below, the parts in bracket are the *ellipted parts*. You should read the sentences as if the parts in the brackets are not there.

Ellipsis within nominal parts

Many young (men) and (many) old men prefer that.

He brought us books (on farming) and magazines on farming.

We can send one (boy) or two boys.

Ellipsis within the verbal part

They have caught and dismissed the corrupt official.

He was working and was studying at the same time.

Ellipsis within the adverbial parts

You can go (by) air, (by) sea or (by) land.

He travels to (Lagos) and from Lagos everyday.

Ellipsis within the adjectival parts

He is very rich and (very) happy

We consider him much richer (than the other man) and more successful than the other man

4.0 SUMMARY

1. Collocations are the acceptable co-occurrence of lexical items in a sentence
2. There are two types of collocations- free collocations and fixed collocations
3. Fixed collocations are otherwise known as idiomatic expressions or simply idioms
4. Conjunction can be used to connect sentences into units of meaning in discourse
5. Ellipsis is the omission of linguistic items which have been realised elsewhere in the sentence
6. This involves the use of pro-forms and pronoun preferences as replacements for particular words in a sentence
7. Structural parallelism normally suggests that there is some meaning relationship (contrast or similarity) between sentences with parallel structures.

UNIT 2 THE NARRATIVE ESSAY: 1.0 INTRODUCTION

According to the ABC of academic writing and ABC of essays, student essay writing develops many of the skills needed for other forms of academic writing. A narrative essay is one of the many different kinds of essay writings that students are expected to engage in while in school and sometimes outside of school. One of the features of essays is originality. You are expected to develop the habit of thinking for yourself so that you can be original in thought and expression. By being original, we mean that students think on their own without the influence of anybody or any material. They can then be confident enough to express their opinions freely on any matter. For you to be able to express yourself well in English or any target language, you should be able to think in that target language and write expressions that have no language interference or one that has minimal language interference.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Identify the basic features of the narrative essay
- Explain the principles of writing narrative essays
- Attempt the writing of narrative essays.

3.1 PRINCIPLES OF WRITING NARRATIVE ESSAYS

Once you have chosen the incident, you have to develop a story line which indicates the plot, setting, characters a climax an anticlimax (at times) and an ending.

3.1.1 THE PLOT

This has to do with the series of incidents forming the plan of action of a story, play or poem. You have to decide on the series of incidents you want to write about. They could be ten, twenty, fifteen etc. You also have to order the events. Which one comes first and which one comes last. It must be ordered in such a way that you will not contradict yourself. For example you cannot say somebody died on Tuesday and then he was seen driving around town the next Friday. It is therefore important for you to know how the events occurred and how they are related to each other.

3.1.2 THE SETTING

Every narrative must have a setting. That is, the place the story is set or reference to specific places that are mentioned in the narrative. You cannot write without situating your narrative or else it will look like a fairy tale that is told by an excited human being.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Think of an incident that happened recently in which you were involved in an accident (home or highway) and the series of events that occurred before the accident occurred. List them in the order of occurrence and write a paragraph each on any two of them. What do you think about them? Give it to a friend to go through and ask for his/her opinion.

3.1.3 THE CHARACTERS

This is another convention of a narrative that has to be followed. If there are no real characters, you must create them and make them say what you want them to say and also achieve what you want them to achieve. The characters must have specified names and functions. They must also be able to interact with one another so that the theme can be properly understood.

3.1.4 INTRODUCTION

There are different ways of introducing a narrative. Some start by introducing the characters while some people present the setting so as to properly situate the narrative. What is important is that it should be done in such a way that will prompt the reader to be interested and continue reading. The introduction often gives the background information which can help the reader to have a better understanding of the narrative. If the introduction is not interesting or challenging to sustain the interest of the reader, the book or narrative piece could be abandoned or put aside until an opportune time when the reader feels he has enough spare time for such novels. Below is an example:

> *WINTER IN LONDON can be rather unfriendly, especially from the view point of a middle aged African immigrant who had had the privilege of growing up in a land that knew no winter. Winter was the season of nostalgia, the time to assess the wisdom of ever venturing out of home in the first place to a faraway land. It is the time when the trees are stripped of their plumes and rendered stark naked.*
>
> *Faces of men and women are squeezed together, making it hardfor the teeth to catch a glimpse of the daylight.*
>
> *(From The Minister's Mother's official car by Kehinde A. Ayoola p.1)*

The writer sets the pace by describing what winter looks like in Londonfrom a psychological point of view, the physical – the trees and plants, in the environment and even people's countenances. The reader already has an idea of what to expect.

3.1.5 THE BODY OF THE NARRATIVE

This is equally important and this is presented in paragraphs. A short narrative could have about five paragraphs including the introduction and the conclusion. A long narrative could have as many as possible depending on how the paragraphs could be divided. A book on narrative story could then be seen not only in terms of the paragraphs alone but the pages. You should write in such a way that you would be able to sustain the interest of your reader. Make your narration vivid by using the appropriate language and connective devices between sentences and paragraphs. Do not contradict yourself in your narration. Some people are so good at giving attention to details in narratives that you can almost see the mental picture of the individual or the situation being described. As a narrator, you should know how to connect events, people and places in such a way that will sustain the attention of your reader. You should also write in such a way that the reader will get the essence of what you are trying to present.

3.1.6 THE CLIMAX AND ENDING

There should be a climax and an ending in any narrative. There will definitely be an introduction which has been discussed. Your story should not be flat. There should be some elements of suspense which would lead to a climax and an ending depending on the theme. A narrative could simply be for entertainment. It depends on the motive of the writer. He could just have the intention of taking people's minds away from the busy frustrations of the day by presenting something that will make them laugh. At times however, the writer may want to instruct, give advice, or help people to be aware of something important in the world around them. A narrative could also end by presenting a moral lesson which every reader or listener can learn from. The concluding paragraph is very important because that is the reader's last contact with the narrative. That is where the writer brigs all the major activities of the characters to a close. Go through the part of the concluding paragraph of the extract that started with winter in London-

> *Many who seek their fortune in foreign lands end u sweeping, sweeping and sweeping until they twist their spines. They wash, wash and wash until their hands get coarse. If you don't believe me, when next someon returns from abroad, shake hands with them and you will Buckingham Palace.*
>
> ***(From The Minister's Mother's official car by Kehinde A. Ayoola)***

From this conclusion, you will notice that the writer has a lesson for readers to learn and this he makes clear in his concluding paragraphs.

3.2 NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

Once you have chosen the incident, the involvement of readers in the story is important. You should try and make the reader a part of the story by carrying him/her along. You can even recreate an incident or the circumstances surrounding an incident and tell the story in another interesting way. You should also be able to think about some generalisations in human experiences or endeavour that the story supports so that the reader can find himself in this generalisation. For example, the general belief that hard work is profitable while laziness tends to poverty. The events in the story must be carefully selected and explained.

In narratives, if the first person narrative technique is used i.e 'I', it draws the reader closer to share in an intimate discussion. Narration is a technique that you have to develop as a writer and you should make your narration lively. You should also vary your style so that you will not bore your reader. Avoid unnecessary mannerism in speech and writing. For example, there is an expression which many university graduates use now

which is uncalled for in most cases. It is the expression- 'as in'. In most of the cases I have heard the expression used, it has been uncalled for. This kind of mannerism can make your write up boring. The third person singular or plural –i.e '*he'* '*she'* or '*they'* can also be used in narratives. Even though it puts a distance between the narrator and the narrative it nevertheless enables the reader to identify minimally or maximally with the narrative. Below is another example of a narrative passage:

Richard laughed at the jokes. He tried too not to drift throughout the conversations, not to show how awkward he felt. He preferred talking to the women, although he had learned not to spend too long with a particular woman or Susan would throw a glass at the wall when they got home He was baffled the first time it happened. He had spent a short time talking to Clovis Bacroft about her brother's life as a District Commissioner in Enugu years ago and afterwards, Susan was silent during the drive back in her chauffeur- driven car.

(from Half of a Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie p56)

In this narrative, the third person singular is used. The names of some individuals are also mentioned. You will notice that from this short paragraph, you have been informed about Susan's temperament. As a writer, you can introduce your characters in different ways to get your reader acquainted them and the situations around them. Building up the essay paragraph by paragraph will form a unified whole and an interesting piece.

5.0 SUMMARY

1. Anarrative essay is one of the many different kinds of essay writings that students engage in while in school.

2. One of the features of essays is originality.

3. You are expected to develop the habit of thinking for yourself so that you can be original in thought and expression

4. The plot has to do with the series of incidents forming the plan of action of a story, play or poem.

5. The setting has to do with reference to specific places that are mentioned in the narrative.

6. The characters must have specified names and functions.

7. In narratives, the first person narrative technique can be used i.e 'I' and this draws the reader closer to share in an intimate discussion

8. You should think about some generalisations in human experiences or endeavour that the story supports so that the reader can find himself in this generalisation.

9. Usually, a narrative ends by presenting a moral lesson which every reader or listener can learn from.

UNIT 3 THE DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the ways in which you can get involved in what you are writing and also get your readers involved is to vividly describe the people, places, things, experiences and situations in your writing. The ability to describe is a universal value of good writing (Nash & Stacey (1997). By all means, a detailed description is better than a general one. People usually prefer the concrete to the abstract. When a reader is able to visualise what the writer is trying to say through vivid descriptive devices, the reader understands better and identifies more with the work. Not all writings demand colourful description, for example scientific reports do not. Whatever means of description you employ depends on the purpose of the writing. Nash & Stacey (1997:130) summarise what readers do to most texts in the following extract-

A reader assumes a passive receptive role. He looks at the picture, audits the lecture, accepts the revelation, beholds the scene, suspends disbelief, and admits into his consciousness this world the writer has made as the only world there is.

According to Nash & Stacey (1997), lively descriptions of people, places and things endow your text with energy and they involve the reader in your meaning. Your ability to describe is a way of making something look, sound, smell, taste, hear, feel or become more of what you want it to be. Description makes your writing memorable and appealing to whoever is going through it.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Identify the basic features of a descriptive piece of writing
- Explain the principles of writing descriptive essays
- Attempt the writing of descriptive essays.

3.1 FORMAL AND THEMATIC PURPOSES OF FICTIONAL DESCRIPTION

Below is a descriptive text:

At almost one O'clock I entered the lobby of the building where I worked and turned towards the escalators, carrying a black Penguin paperback and a small white CVS bag, its receipt stapled over the top. The escalators rose toward the mezzanine, where my office was. They were the free-standing kind: a pair of integral signs swooping upward between the two floors they served without struts or piers to bear ay intermediate weight. On sunny days like this one, a temporary, steeper escalator of daylight formed by intersections of the lobby's towering volumes of marble and glass, met the real escalators just above their middle point, spreading into a needy area of shine where it fell against their brushed-steel side panels, and adding long glossy highlights to each of the black rubber handrails which wavered slightly as the handrails slid on their tracks, like the radians of black luster that ride the undulating outer edge of an LP. **(Nash & Stacey (1997:132)**

As the first paragraph of a novel, its main purpose is to establish the scene for the story. In this paragraph, a place is described. A man enters the building after lunch hour and he is carrying some things.

3.1.1 CLOSE OBSERVATION

For you to be able to describe adequately, you need to engage in close observation and be able to identify and name the things that you see, their placement or position where they are placed. You can do this by closing your eyes and with your mind eye imagine what you see or what you used to see. Document the result of your mind's journey. If possible, then go to the place and see things physically and document them again. In this way you have two lists which will be useful later when you want to write.

3.1.2 CLOSE SELECTION

Apart from the fact that you need to observe closely you also have to do a close selection of the things you see and the ones you want to name and bring to focus so that they can match your narrative action

If you do not do this you may over do things. You can not possibly name everything you see. The reader would have to use their imagination to fill in the gaps in the world of the story or event being described. There is a relationship between descriptive detail and narrative action and they must fit one another. Fiction writers build a world that is close to the social world in which we live and the sensory images are the tools they use in building this world. Description of the scenes and actions are given but the description should not be done in such a way that it will overpower the action except it is required by the theme. What people do and say in the imagined world is what sustains our interest.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Can you imagine where your workplace or faculty is? Is there any main entrance to the place? Is there a particular door or set of doors you go through before getting to your office or Faculty office? Are there any remarkable things there you never bothered yourself to look closely at as regards some specific details? Choose that place or any other place you think you want to describe, try to go through in your mind's eye. As you come into the place, list the objects you see either to your left or to your right, in front of you etc. then try to select the ones you think are worthy of note and attempt a description of that place and you will be surprised at the information you have on paper which you have never bothered yourself about.

3.1.3 FORMULATE AN IMPRESSION

Just imagine that you now have the list of things at the entrance of your faculty as you were asked to do in the exercise above. Decide on a point of view- that is- do you want to imagine yourself doing the action or someone else? It would either be 'I' or he /she etc. Having a point of view or creating one will make you actively participate in the story or narrative yourself. You must discover and create an impression. The impressions will be what you feel about a person an event or situation. You must examine yourself on why you think the way you do through the impression you have created. Your impression will guide the selection of the details you include in the narrative. The details must then fit into the plot of the story. Do you know that if you believe that the entrance of your faculty is beautiful, you will create that impression with the way you describe the details.

3.1.4 PRACTISE FREE WRITING

Writing is a way of expressing yourself. And one of the types of writing that is common among students is free writing. What is important is for the ideas to flow and as long as you keep on writing, whatever is wrong in your writing can always be corrected. Let us imagine that you want to write on the entrance of your faculty as we mentioned earlier. You already have the list with you and you have also gone through the place again to reconfirm your mind selection. You can then start by trying to put something on paper. Many students ask themselves 'how am I going to start? Just start anyhow. Put your pen or pencil on paper and star writing. Look up at the title and write something. You may discover that you have cancelled a lot of things and that the work is rough. Do not mind the mistakes. The advantage of this type of writing is that that you are alone and nobody sees those mistakes. After you have scribbled for some time, stop and go over what you have written. Try to correct them if you can at that point in time or you can sleepover it and then try to see how you can correct the paragraph or page. If you ask most writers, they will tell you about this experience of theirs and how they got over it. The approach you have been told is at best good for long story writers who are not under any examination pressure.

As a student writing a descriptive essay in an examination, what takes the place of free writing is concentrated thought. Description is used to create worlds for creative writing, literary journals, personal letters, stories and plays, travel accounts, poetry and memoirs. In some other expository or stricter forms of academic writing, writers do not try to create independent scenes, situations or worlds. In descriptive essays, you have to involve your readers as you explore the topic through naming and detailing of events, people and places.

For classroom exercises which are meant to be submitted immediately or during examinations, you have to take time out- preferably seven to eight minutes to think and just organise your thoughts. You just do not pick up your biro and start writing without doing some free thinking about the topic and how to go about it. You just go ahead and use words to describe your observations.

In descriptive essays, we use words to convey what something, or someone, a situation, an incident is like. Describing a thing is different from when you are evaluating. You are not arguing, interpreting or evaluating (judging). In descriptive essays, there is a lot of explanation of facts presented on things seen. Essays can be said to be descriptive when they present facts and ideas with little argument or interpretation. Below is an example from *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Adichie-

> *His aunty walked faster, his slippers making slap-slap sounds that echoed in the silent street. Ugwu wondered if she too could feel the coal tar getting hotter underneath, through her thin soles.------. He smelt something sweet; as they walked into a compound and was sure it came from the white flowers clustered on the bushes at the entrance. The bushes were shaped like slender hills. The lawn glistened, butterflies hovered around.*

In the text above, you will notice that it is the actions of human beings that are described in the first part of the paragraph, not a location, while some plants were described in the later part. The narrative point of view is basically the third person singular- '*he'* along with the invisible '*they'* Describing the lawns further would bring in '*it'* as a point of view.

4.0 SUMMARY

1. You should vividly describe the people, places, things, experiences, situations in your writing.

2. For you to practice the art of description, you have to be involved yourself

3. Engage in close observation and be able to identify and name the things that you see, their placement or position where they are placed

4. For you to be able to describe adequately, you need to engage in close observation and be able to identify and name the things that you see, their placement or position where they are placed

5. Do a close selection of the things you see and the ones you want to name and bring to focus so that they can match your narrative action

6. Having a point of view or creating one will make you actively participate in the story or narrative yourself

7. Practise free writing which is a way of expressing yourself

8. Description is used to create worlds for creative writing- such as literary journals, personal letters, stories and plays, travel accounts poetry and memoirs

UNIT 4 THE PERSUASIVE/ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In persuasive or argumentative essays, we try to convince others to agree with our opinions and facts, and share our values. For you to be able to convince another person, you need to know your facts and be able to present them convincingly enough. You have to be sure of the facts by making sure your sources are correct and verifiable. You should remember that since you are writing, many people will see your work and that is why you need to be sure your facts are in order or else you will not be able to convince anybody. You will only end up being frustrated by the time people start dismantling what you think you have built up.

Unlike narratives and descriptive essays which can be based on fiction, argumentative writings are hooked on facts. Your reasoning must sound logical to the human mind and your motive achievable.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Explain what argumentative essays are
- Identify some of the strategies for writing argumentative essays
- Use some of these strategies for writing sections of argumentative essays for class presentation or take home assignments.

3.1 RESEARCH

It is important that you do some fact finding work on whatever topic you choose. Decide on the facts or the points you want to present, their number and how you want to arrange them. This is important because your style of presentation matters a lot. Some people start by giving heart provoking questions to the audience or readers. For example, you can have questions such as-

Ladies and gentlemen, why do you think we have constant power failure?

Why are our roads as bad as they are?

Why can we not feed our families with balanced diets?

These are thought-provoking questions that border on people's welfare and which are likely to draw the attention of the reader or the listener to the topic. If the arguments that follow these questions are well managed, the speaker is likely to convince the audience to his/her side. For you to make convincing statements on a topic that borders on the questions above, you need to research into some of the causes of power failure, problems of food production in the country, road management in the country etc.

Some people, on the other hand, start with some allusions while some allusions while some other just go straight to the others just go straight to the topic, declare their stand on the issue and give reasons for their arguments. Some people start with pleasant jokes while some start on a level ground emotionally and then build up to elicit the interest, concern and compassion of the audience. You have to think about possible emotions/ emotional reactions and use them in your discussion of the topic.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

Introductions are very important because they give the reader the first impression of the write up. Bill Daly, (1997) in 'writing introductions to argumentative essays (see reference at the end of the unit) notes that there are four parts of an introduction- It introduces the topic, states why the topic is important, states the differences of opinion about the topic and describes how the assignment will be structured and what the writer's stand is. All these should be ordered in an introduction.

3.2.1 ORDERING SENTENCES IN AN INTRODUCTION

In an introduction, sentences should be ordered in such a way that the writer's line of argument or position is clear. Below is an example of an ordered introduction from the model essay on Marine Parks by Bill Daly (see reference at the end of the unit)-

> *The issue of whether we should allow marine parks to stay open has been widely debated in our community recently. It is an important issue because it concerns fundamental moral and economic questions about the way we use our native wildlife. A variety of different arguments have been put forward about this issue. This essay will consider arguments for having marine parks and point to some of the problems with these views. It will then put forward reasons for the introduction of laws which prohibit these unnecessary and cruel institutions.*

You must make sure that as a writer, your introductory sentences are not haphazard. Write in such a way that the reader will be encouraged to continue reading your work. The first sentence in the example above is a general opinion on what people's feelings are on the issue of marine parks and the writer then zeros in on his/her own stand in the last sentence.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISES 1

The sentences below are from Bill Daly's writings on argumentative essays (see reference at the end of this unit) Try to put the sentences in the correct order. They make up the introduction of an article on whether Australia should become a republic.

a. As a result, the issue is a very controversial one and has attracted a lot of debate.

b. It will then put forward a number of reasons why Australia should change to a republican form of government.

c. The question of whether we maintain the monarchy is not merely a legal detail but is intrinsically linked to the way we perceive ourselves as a distinct nation of people with its own identity and culture.

d. Since the time of federation, Australia has been a constitutional monarchy with the Queen of the United Kingdom as its head of state.

e. This essay will consider some of the arguments for maintaining the monarch as head of state and will outline some of the problems with this position.

f. However, today many Australians are questioning whether this form of government is still relevant or appropriate and are suggesting that we move towards the establishment of a republic.

3.3 PARAGRAPH FLOW

It is important that as you develop your paragraphs, there must be paragraph flow. This is where you have to make use of transitional words that you learnt in the earlier units- however, in addition, nevertheless etc. You should be able to quote sources of information to support your argument and establish authority for what you have written. As much as possible, you should make sure that your arguments are logical and sensible. Try as much as possible not to contradict yourself or else, the purpose of writing an argumentative essay will be defeated. There could be as many paragraphs as you want depending on the purpose for which the essay is written. If it is a class essay, it may not be more than five or six and this includes the introduction and the conclusion. But if you are contributing to a newspaper article it could be more than that.

3.4 SUMMARY

This is a very important aspect of the essay. Whether the essay is written or presented orally, summarising the major points is important. If a writer has presented a number of points, the reader may forget some of them. If the major points are not summarised to remind the reader of the salient points you have advanced to support your argument, the reader may forget. While writing the summary, you need to refer to the initial paragraphs and the main points. Your conclusion should restate the main ideas and emphasise the importance of the arguments.

3.5 EDITING

This is an important aspect of any essay writing not just argumentative essays. You need to go over your work and make all necessary corrections before you submit. There could have been omissions- that is some points or ideas you wanted to include which you forgot while writing. On the other hand, there could be some points which you included at a point but which you found unnecessary when you went over again. There could also be punctuation and spelling mistakes which if uncorrected could mar the presentation or essay.

The advent of computers has however made editing easy because it is just a question of deleting and re-writing. After you have edited your essay, go over the whole essay again to be sure that your ideas are well presented. If it is not a class assignment where everyone is expected to present their work individually, you could give your essay to a friend to go through for you. Ask for their comments. If there is any form of criticism, check your facts again before you submit your work.

3.6 CONCLUSION OF THE ESSAY

Conclusions are as important as introductions. The conclusion is aimed at informing the reader that you have come to the end of your presentation and that you have covered all the important points. Some writers try to highlight these important points in the summary/conclusion so as to remind the reader of the writer's line of argument. The conclusion must be carefully written because this is the last part of your essay that the readers will come in contact with and it will make a lasting impression on them. Below is an example of the conclusion from the model essay on marine parks as recorded by Bill Daly (1997)

> *In conclusion, these parks should be closed, or at the very least, no new animals should be captured for marin parks in the future. Our society is no longer prepared to tolerate unnecessary cruelty to animals for science and entertainment. If we continue with our past crimes against these creatures we will be remembered as cruel and inhuman by the generations of the future.*

In your conclusion, you need to restate your own side of the argument which you have presented strongly in your essay. You also need to include two or three sentences which give a general summary of your side of the argument. You can also provide information on the consequences of not heading your advice and what humanity stands to gain if people identify with your stand on the issue.

Sentences can also be ordered in a conclusion to give a logical presentation to the concluding part of the argument. You should try to order the sentences in your conclusion so that the reader can make up his/her mind on what decisions to take as regards accepting or rejecting your line of argument

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISES 2

Below are some sentences that make up the concluding part of an argumentative essay. Re-arrange them in an acceptable and logical order. These sentences are taken from Bill Daly's (1997) sample sentences of a concluding paragraph of an argumentative essay. (see reference at the end of the unit).

a. If we fail to meet our obligations in this area, we will be sacrificing our present and future well-being merely in order to appease out dated notions of family life and to achieve short-term financial savings.

b. In conclusion, it is essential that we support the nation's parents and children by funding more childcare places.

c. Only in this way can we provide the valuable learning environments that young Australians need while, at the same time, utilising the skills of all productive members of our society.

d. The entire community will then be enriched economically, socially and culturally.

After rearranging the sentences, read them out to your classmates and find out if you all got the gist of what the conclusion is all about.

4.0 SUMMARY

1. For you to be able to convince another person, you need to know your facts and be able to present them convincingly enough.

2. In persuasive or argumentative essays, we try to convince others to agree with our opinions and/or facts, and share our values.

3. You have to be sure of the facts by making sure your sources are correct and verifiable.

4. It is important that you do some fact finding work on whatever topic you choose.

5. In an introduction, sentences should be ordered in such a way that the writer's line of argument and position are clear.

6. You must make sure that as a writer, your introductory sentence

are not haphazard.

7. It is important that as you develop your paragraphs, there must be paragraph flow.

8. Whether the essay is written or presented orally summarising the major points is important.

9. The conclusion must be carefully written because this is the last part of your essay that the readers will come in contact with and it will make a lasting impression on them.

UNIT 5 EXPOSITORY ESSAYS

Composition can be many things, a liberal art, a loner's sullen craft, a parliament of one, but never a matter of regulations handed down from above. Ever a dictatorship; nor yet an anarchy, for there are some rules after all-but they are such governing principles as the governed must discover for themselves, in a free society of writing. (Nash and Stancey 1997:182)

Starts with life; makes a text; then a revision literally, a second seeing; an afterthought erasing some but not all of the original while writing something new over the first layer of text (Gore Vidal, Palimpsest, in Nash and Stacey (1997)

In this unit, we shall discuss expository essays which are another form of writing which you may be required to do as a university student. You need to be versed in writing different kinds of essays because of both current academic challenges and future societal expectations of a person of your calibre. Much is expected of you in the labour market and socially as a citizen of any community. The type of essay described in this unit is such that require in-depth information.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An expository essay is any type of essay or writing that is used to describe, explain or inform the reader on a specific or particular aspect of a topic. This is common in the sciences and the humanities. The student may be required to give in-depth information or demonstrate indepth knowledge of the circumstances surrounding a particular thing or situation. In other words, the writer is expected to bring to the fore some verifiable facts on the topic to be discussed. Below are the objectives of the unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Explain what expository essays are
- Identify some of the strategies for writing expository essays
- Use some of these strategies in writing sections of expository essays for class presentation or take- home assignments.

Some of the strategies for writing expository essays that will be discussed in this unit are similar in some ways to some of the ones that have been discussed in some of the earlier units. But because repetition makes for emphasis, we shall still mention some of them in this unit. Below are some of the steps we need to take while planning to write an *expository essay.*

3.1 CHOOSING A TOPIC

Before you can say you want to write, you must have had a topic in mind. In regular classroom situations, students are usually given topics to write on. But occasionally, students are allowed to choose a topic of their own. Once you have a topic, you have to study the topic very well so that you will if it requires a short response or a long one. This information is important because your lecturer may be expecting a long essay from you while you think it is a short one. You may loose marks if you do not write up to the required length because it would mean you have not fully discussed some essential points in the essay. In such a situation you have not met the expectations of your lecturer. You must be sure of what is expected of you in terms of essay length so that the topic can be well discussed. Your topic should also not be too narrow as this will make it difficult for you to get enough facts for the specific length of essay. In your choice of topic selection, you must make sure you choose a topic that is big enough to be discussed but narrow enough to be managed e.g.

1. *The disappearance and reappearance of groundnut pyramids in Northern Nigeria: the need for a reappraisal.*
2. *The use of firewood for local combustion in Nigeria- a point to consider.*
3. *Empowering women through small scale businesses in Nigeria the way forward.*
4. *Normal and excessive use of drugs.*

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Imagine that you are in a school where majority of the students smoke and take hard drugs. Many of them misbehave in class and are rude to their tutorial instructors, insulting and quarrelling with other students while some do not attend lectures at all. The school authority does not like these kinds of behaviour and has therefore asked you to write an expository essay on the topic - 'Normal and excessive use of drugs'.

How will you start?
What are some of the research work you need to do?
What reference materials will you consult?
How will you order your points?

3.2 DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERN WRITING

In the article on writing excellent expository essays; guidelines and tips by custompapers.com (see full reference at the end of the unit), a few steps are highlighted on the kind of developmental patterns that can be adopted while writing expository essays. In this section, some of these tips will be discussed.

3.2.1 DEFINITION

You may have to define some terms in your attempt to write an expository essay. For example, writing an expository essay on a topic such as '*Reminiscences on the Nigerian Civil War'* or '*The Oil Industry in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria'* require your giving definitions or explanation of terms such as – *reminiscences, industry, Niger Delta* etc. You may wonder why you need to define or explain what you mean by Niger Delta when it is so clear to everyone here. The answer is simple. If your work is going on the net, not everybody knows where Niger Delta is, so you have to explain and also indicate the location. This will make your discussion of the topic interesting vivid and realistic. You may need to give examples of some of the things you mention so that your illustrations can be clear to the reader.

3.2.2 CAUSE AND EFFECT

In a developmental pattern you may need to illustrate the connection between events or how one event is dependent on another or how one event is result of a previous one. Do not forget

you need to substantiate your points at any point in time. You must not be found to be giving wrong claims. Remember that if your writing is made public, someone else can quote you or refer to something you said later on or some years to come. And you would not want to be misrepresented.

3.2.3 CLASSIFICATION

You may need to do some classification while writing the essay. For example, you may have to classify the effect of certain actions taken by the Federal government during the civil war to be able to determine whether they were positive, negative, profitable, devastating or necessary. This may involve listing some observable resultant effects of some decisions taken. But you have to be careful about this. Expository essays are revealing so you must be careful not to run down individuals. You can use expressions that are not absolutes when you are not too sure. You can use expressions such as- *probably, unconfirmed sources*, an *eyewitness' account*. But where you are absolutely sure of your claim and you have substantiated facts on the issue, you can refer to such while writing.

3.2.4 COMPARE AND CONTRAST

You may need to do some form of comparative work at times. As a writer may have to examine the basic differences between the actions taken and actions not taken at times. You can do some form of comparison or a critical analysis of the topic or events or situations.

3.3 ORGANISATION

This has to do with the arrangement of the work as a whole, the number of paragraphs, the points to discuss, the arrangement of the points etc. You have to decide on the number of paragraphs you want but this also has to do with how long the essay is. Most school essays have about five paragraphs whereas some higher institution essays could be up to seven or eight including the introduction and the summary. If the points you want to consider are many, you then have one introductory paragraph, a body of paragraphs and a concluding paragraph. You should discuss each major division of your work appropriately and clearly in paragraphs so that the reader would be able to understand what you are talking about and follow your line of reasoning.

3.4 RESEARCH WORK

Most students start writing essays without trying to find out something about the topic. You need to research on the topic you want to write about. You may have to find out about the origin of a word, the meaning of a concept, the usefulness of an object, idea or concept etc.

Researching a topic always enriches your work. Expository essays in particular are meant to dig out facts about a situation or thing and since you are not an encyclopaedia, you cannot know everything. You need to consult books, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, internet etc as resource materials. The internet in particular is a very valuable resource material which you can consult on any area of study. But remember to acknowledge your source of information. That is the hall mark of a good academic. If however, you find it difficult to get good reference materials, you have to take time to think on the topic and go through some local newspapers and magazines peradventure you will find some useful information on the topic. Just to give you an idea of how to construct your sentences in an expository essay, below is an extract on the introductory section of a write up titled '*Failure of State Administration'* by *Bamidele Ayo* in his book *Public Administration and the Conduct of Community Affairs Among the Yoruba in Nigeria:*

> *One way of measuring the success or failure of governments in modern societies is to assess how far such governments go in developing or failing to develop the conditions for satisfying the basic needs of the people they govern.*
>
> *The form of governance in Africa is largely centralised. This manifests itself not only in the political and administrative realms, but also in the allocation, distribution and utilization of human, financial, and material resources. National governments have also intruded, in one way or the other, in the activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including religious organizations. All efforts to decentralize decision making power, and allocation and distribution of resources, have been frustrated by central governments in Africa.*
>
> *State control of national resources and monopoly of decision making power has retarded socioeconomic development (Adedeji). Most of Africa's population live below the poverty line. A pervasive intervention of the state in the management of national economies in the post-independence African states remains the source of the tragedies which contemporary Africa is forced to live with (Musa-Nda 3-5).*
>
> *Yet many social scientists drawn from Africa and the western countries have influenced and supported this centralized approach to governance and social and economic development in Africa. Some of these authors include Aboyade, Apter, Esman, Huntington, and Mabogunje (1980). We shall return to this point later in this chapter.*
>
> *At the same time, there is a good number of other scholars from other disciplines, especially the broader humanities, who have challenged this approach. These scholars see parallels to this centralized approach to constituting order in autocratic and exploitative regimes and in the pathologies of the Ancient Regime in France. Some of the noble critics of autocratic regimes in Africa (civilian and military regimes) include Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, James Ngugi, Mongo Beti, Alexanderm* Biyidiaka, Camera Lye, and Jack Mapanje, to mention just a few. These and other critics have through their literary writings launchedpersistent attacks on the autocratic regimes in Africa.
>
> (From *Public Administration and the Conduct of Community Affairs* by S. Bamidele Ayo, PhD)

You will notice that the writer of the text above made reference to many scholars to substantiate his /her points about the governance in Africa. This is just the introductory part of the essay. The writer quoted authorities who have worked in this area of study along with the dates their worked were published.

He even referred to some of them as- *noble critics.*

All these are important in an expository kind of essay. It is a more serious essay than the argumentative essay. You will notice that we started from the narrative which is light, then, to descriptive which requires a lot of your attention, then, to argumentative which also requires your getting facts to support your point of view and lastly to expository which is a serious form of writing which needs documented facts at times. Not all of life would be on the light mood all the time; a few things could need some form of seriousness occasionally. As a result, you should get prepared for all forms of writings any time.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Mention some of the resource materials you need on a topic such as *'Foreign Investment in Nigeria*: a Necessary Step for National Development'.

4.0 SUMMARY

1. An expository essay is any type of essay or writing that is used to describe, explain or inform the reader on a specific or particular aspect of a topic.

2. Once you have a topic, you have to study the topic very well so that you will know if it requires a short response or a long one.

3. Organisation has to do with the arrangement of the work as a whole, the number of paragraphs, the points to discuss, the arrangement of the points.

4. You need to research on the topic you want to write about

5. Expository essays in particular are meant to dig out facts about a situation or thing.

6. You may need to consult books, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, internet etc as resource materials